

Abstract, thick, rounded lines in teal and dark blue, resembling a stylized path or a graphic element, located on the left side of the cover.

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE:
LIBRARIES, LOCKDOWN
AND LOOKING AHEAD**

**STAFF SURVEY
BACKGROUND
REPORT**

Abstract, thick, rounded lines in teal and dark blue, continuing from the top left, located at the bottom of the cover.

Dr Jenny Peachey



CHANGING MINDS • CHANGING LIVES

ABOUT THE CARNEGIE UK TRUST

The Carnegie UK Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds by influencing and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work.

The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Executive Summary

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE OFFERS DURING LOCKDOWN

During lockdown, a range of physical and digital services were offered by the public library services that engaged in this research.

- Whilst services offered during lockdown were primarily targeted at families with young children, over half of survey respondents worked in a service where there were specific offers for older people.
- 100% of services represented in the survey offered e-books and at least one additional type of digital service and 89% of survey respondents worked in a service that offered a physical service.
 - The top five digital offers were access to e-books, access to e-audio books, access to e-magazines and e-comics, access to e-reference and other resources, and rhyme and story times for babies and toddlers.
 - The top three physical offers involved calling users/members; calling members over 70; and home delivery service.

In terms of staff opinion on the services offered during lockdown:

On average, library staff felt that their service had done a good job of meeting people's needs during the Covid-19 crisis, with a rating of 6.6/10 on a scale of poor (0) to excellent (10).

- Those who gave higher scores for meeting needs also reported their service offering more digital and physical offers than those who did not give a high score.
- Those working in a frontline service were more likely to give a more generous score.

Whilst staff were generally proud of the online library service offer over lockdown, they also identified a range of ways in which digital hampered their ability to provide a satisfactory service. The reasons fell into one of two broad categories:

- the reach and penetration of digital services; and
- the limitations of the digital modes of delivery compared to face-to-face physical delivery.

This last was regarded as problematic as it meant the quality of interaction and support, and the full benefits of a given activity that the service could deliver were compromised. One impact of this was that the public library service was regarded as being unable to act as a 'service of first resort' and to support people who were 'borderline vulnerable'.

ENABLERS AND INHIBITORS

Survey responses indicate that:

- Local authority or local attitude to risk and understanding of what the public library service can offer emerged as key enablers or inhibitors to developing and delivering library offers during lockdown.
- Local authorities or library services that adopted a more stringent approach to risk and deprioritised library services for risk assessments and reopening were less able to offer a varied service.
- Organisational culture in relation to whether or not frontline staff had a voice in suggesting or shaping offers had an impact on the services developed during lockdown.

STAFF AND SKILLS

The survey drew on the skills listed in CILIP Library Association's Professional Skills and Knowledge Base framework to gauge which skills, if any, came to the fore during lockdown.

- The findings reveal that some of the specialist outreach services implemented in lockdown require or mimic the core skill set that library staff utilised day-to-day pre-Covid-19 in order to offer support to library users.
- Specifically, redeployed staff drew heavily on: customer service skills, learning and support skills, information and knowledge management skills, and skills relating to adaptability and working in new teams.
- The findings reveal that those who remained working in the service drew much less on their customer service, learning and support skills, and information and knowledge management skills than they did prior to lockdown.
- This perhaps indicates: a) that the physical building and the interaction it enables is a core part of how staff support their communities, b) the online offer as it was conceived and delivered during lockdown did not allow for this type of support to be offered.

The survey also identified:

- Digital and advocacy skills as an area for development.
- A possible issue with organisational culture where collective leadership is not a cultural norm, or that advocacy, innovation or strategic thinking are not regarded as jointly held responsibilities.

STAFF EXPERIENCE

Staff experience of lockdown varied hugely. Some felt inspired and energised by the challenge that Covid-19 posed and expressed their own, and others' ability to deliver above and beyond during this time. Others felt isolated, overwhelmed and uncertain. Personal circumstances, ways of working and working culture had a significant impact on staff experience of lockdown.

FUTURE SERVICE

- Moving forward, staff generally felt that it was important to focus on the following types of service delivery: physical, digital, mobile, library at home and order and collect service.
- The vast majority of responses to what a future service should focus on fell into one of the following categories:
 - community hub/supporting social relationships and interaction (combatting loneliness);
 - culture;
 - digital access and skills;
 - economic wellbeing;
 - education/learning;
 - equality/equity;
 - health and wellbeing;
 - information and decision making; and
 - reading.
- Whilst some staff felt optimistic about the relevance and role of the public library service in the months and years to come, there was also nervousness about whether funding, political support or a lack of understanding among decision makers of what the service does, could be barriers to the essential role services could play.

Introduction

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The Carnegie UK Trust has long recognised the significant and enduring contribution the public library service makes to improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Given that the Covid-19 pandemic saw the vast majority of library buildings close their doors to the UK public during lockdown¹, we were keen to understand the impact this had on the library offer at this time. The rationale for the research was two-fold. First, whilst the building is a core part of the library service offer, it is not the whole of it. Second, lockdown appeared to trigger a growing need for the type of support that public library services and their staff can provide. To gather new data on these issues we conducted public polling of 2,196 UK adults, analysed 1,196 responses to a public library staff survey and carried out in-depth interviews with 22 Heads of Service.

This report summarises the findings from our survey for UK public library staff. Separate research reports cover the findings from the [public polling](#) and the [Heads of Service interviews](#). An [overarching research and policy report](#) that pulls learning from the three data sources together and puts forward action areas, is also available.

METHOD AND CAVEATS

The survey asked questions relating to: the library services offered during lockdown, the potential role of public library services in the post-lockdown environment, the skills staff did (or did not) utilise during lockdown and the experience of staff during this time.

The survey was made available on Survey Monkey and was open for 14 days, from 19 June 2020 – 3 July 2020. It received 1,196 responses from library staff across the UK. The full list of questions asked can be found in the appendix.

¹ “Lockdown” is used to reflect the various levels of lockdown measures placed across the population in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales from the end of March 2020 to June/July 2020. This is the period in which individuals’ ability to leave their homes was restricted; cafes, restaurants and non-essential shops were closed; travel was banned; workers were placed on furlough or required to work from home; and people were instructed to socially distance themselves from those living outside their immediate household.





The staff survey was analysed by jurisdiction, role of respondent and whether or not they were redeployed, remained in the library service or were not working. Key differences in responses were pulled out against these characteristics. In addition, statistical analysis was conducted on responses to understand whether the number and type of services offered by libraries during lockdown had any correlation with staff perceptions of the effort their service put into meeting needs and whether they felt it met needs during lockdown.

An inductive, grounded-theory approach was taken to open-ended questions: responses were reviewed to derive and determine appropriate codes and then themes from these codes. Open-ended questions analysed with this approach included those soliciting opinions on understanding and meeting community need, anything library staff were particularly proud of, felt could have been better or did not translate to a digital format, the experience library staff had of lockdown and the role of a future public library service.

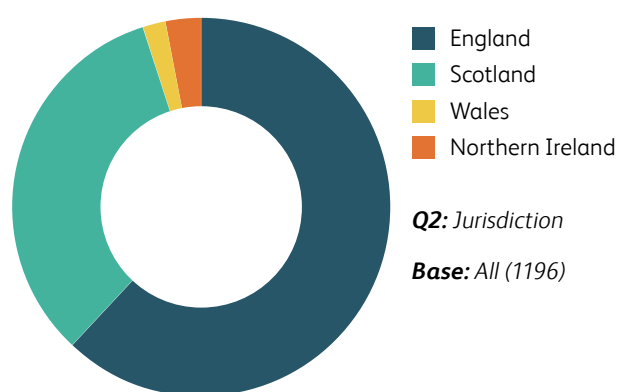
The staff survey was designed with the explicit purpose of giving library staff the opportunity to voice what they thought and how they felt. As such, there was no limit placed on the number of responses solicited from any given local authority. In terms of staff perceptions and reflections on experience we have tried to encompass the varied experiences of staff, whilst also seeking to reflect an ‘overall’ sense of what people thought and felt on certain subjects. In terms of services, the approach taken means that findings are indicative: in some instances we received multiple responses from a single service and it is possible (indeed likely) that different people within the same service have different awareness of the number and type of services offered by their public library service during lockdown; and have differing opinions as to their quality.

WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?

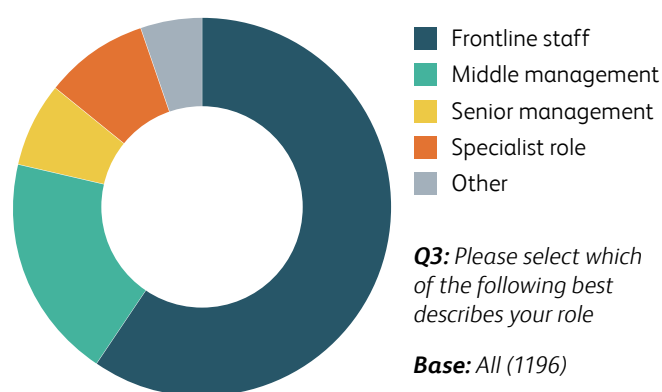
129 Library services from across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales were represented in the survey responses. A further 186 respondents did not identify which library service they worked in. More than one response was received from several local authority areas. One local authority provided 77 responses,

	 England	 Scotland	 Wales	 Northern Ireland	Not identified
Number of local authorities represented in survey responses	91	28	9	1	186
Percentage of library services represented in a particular jurisdiction	60%	88%	41%	100%	N/A

Survey respondents by jurisdiction



Survey respondents by role type



which was very much an outlier; the vast majority of responses received from a given service was either one, or in the region of two to ten. The table above sets out how many local authorities were represented by survey responses from each jurisdiction.

In terms of staff role, almost 3 in 5 responses to the survey came from frontline staff and almost 1 in 5 were from those in middle management roles. The remaining fifth of respondents were split between those in senior management, specialist or other roles.

THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND WHEN READING THIS REPORT

Public library services were not all in the same situation during lockdown. They were resourced and enabled to differing degrees during this time in order to serve communities and populations of different sizes, make-up and needs. Approaches to the pandemic differed between the jurisdictions and risk appetite differed between local authorities, having a varying impact on the services that public libraries offered during

lockdown. Staff were variously working from home, redeployed, or furloughed across the UK depending on factors such as the need for redeployed staff in the wider council area; and whether a library was a nationally run service, part of a local authority, a trust or a mutual. It follows that, what some library services offered during lockdown, others could not.

Qualitative responses to the survey also show that staff, irrespective of role, had varying personal experiences and circumstances during lockdown. From those that were isolated with underlying or hidden health conditions, to those juggling a range of caring responsibilities and work; from those that were in a home environment conducive to homeworking to those that were not.

It follows that the intention behind this report isn't to compare public library services or their staff. Rather, it provides new insight into what services were offered during lockdown, staff opinion of those services, staff skills, staff experience and working culture and ways of working.

Library Services Offered During Lockdown

During lockdown, public library services across the UK offered a range of services. Many public library services provided physical as well as digital offers in order to provide as full a service to their community as possible, within the restricted context. The quotations below give a flavour for the type of services delivered during lockdown:

“We have expanded e-Services, doubled our e-Book/e-Audio content, personally contacted all housebound and elderly customers, supplied tablets for people with no devices, set up a support for using IT, directly contacted schools and are now doing book deliveries and planning on opening our collection service from 29 June.”
SPECIALIST STAFF, SCOTLAND

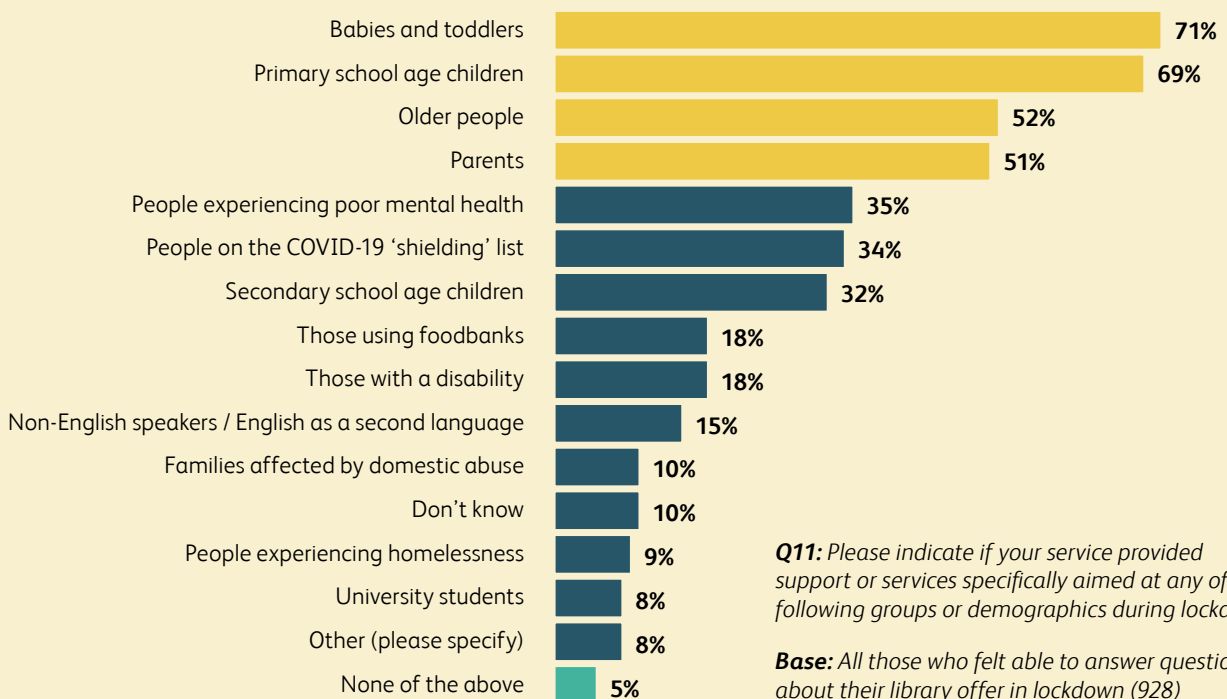
“We have introduced several online services, promoted existing online services, helped vulnerable people to get food packages/online shopping,

maintained contact with our older users by telephoning to enquire about their welfare/to keep them updated, helped people to apply for universal credit, disabled blue badges, assisted the government to get laptops to children to help them to complete homework and referred adults without laptops to services where they can hire or purchase laptops inexpensively. We are also constantly discussing how to safely get books to vulnerable Library users and to try to get activity packs to them.”
MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

Services during lockdown were primarily targeted at families with young children but over half of survey respondents worked in a service that also provided specific services for older people, as the graph below illustrates.

This section of the report outlines in more detail the digital and physical services offered by public library services during lockdown.

Target audience for public library services’ offers during lockdown



Q11: Please indicate if your service provided support or services specifically aimed at any of the following groups or demographics during lockdown

Base: All those who felt able to answer questions about their library offer in lockdown (928)

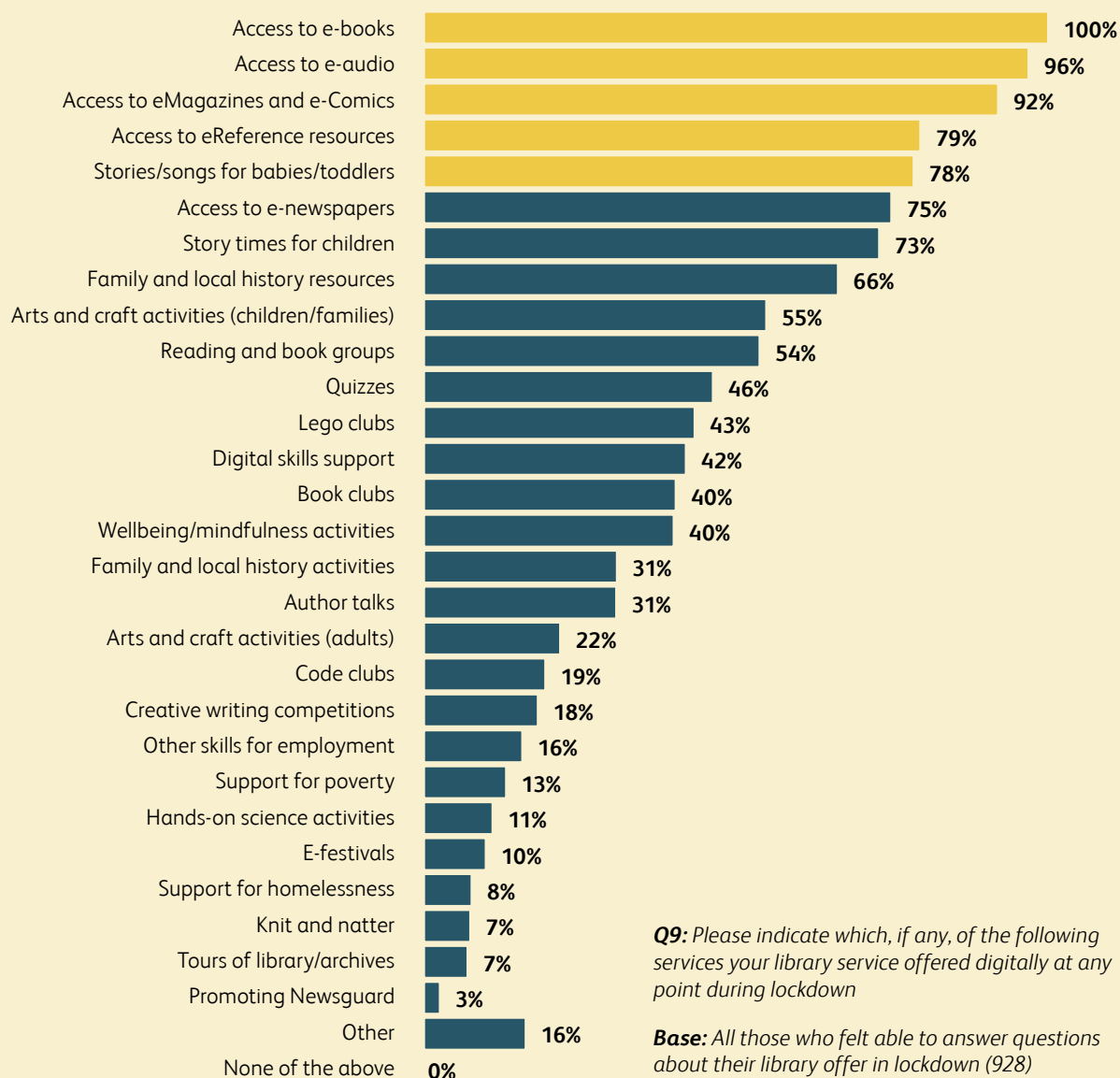
DIGITAL SERVICES

Digital services were regarded by staff as the main way in which community need was met during lockdown. All library services that participated in the survey offered e-books and at least one additional kind of digital activity or resource. The most commonly offered digital resources were access to e-books, access to e-audio books, access to e-magazines and e-comics, access to e-reference and other resources², and rhyme and story times for babies and toddlers. Survey respondents reported particularly significant increases in e-membership and in e-book/e-audio downloads during lockdown.

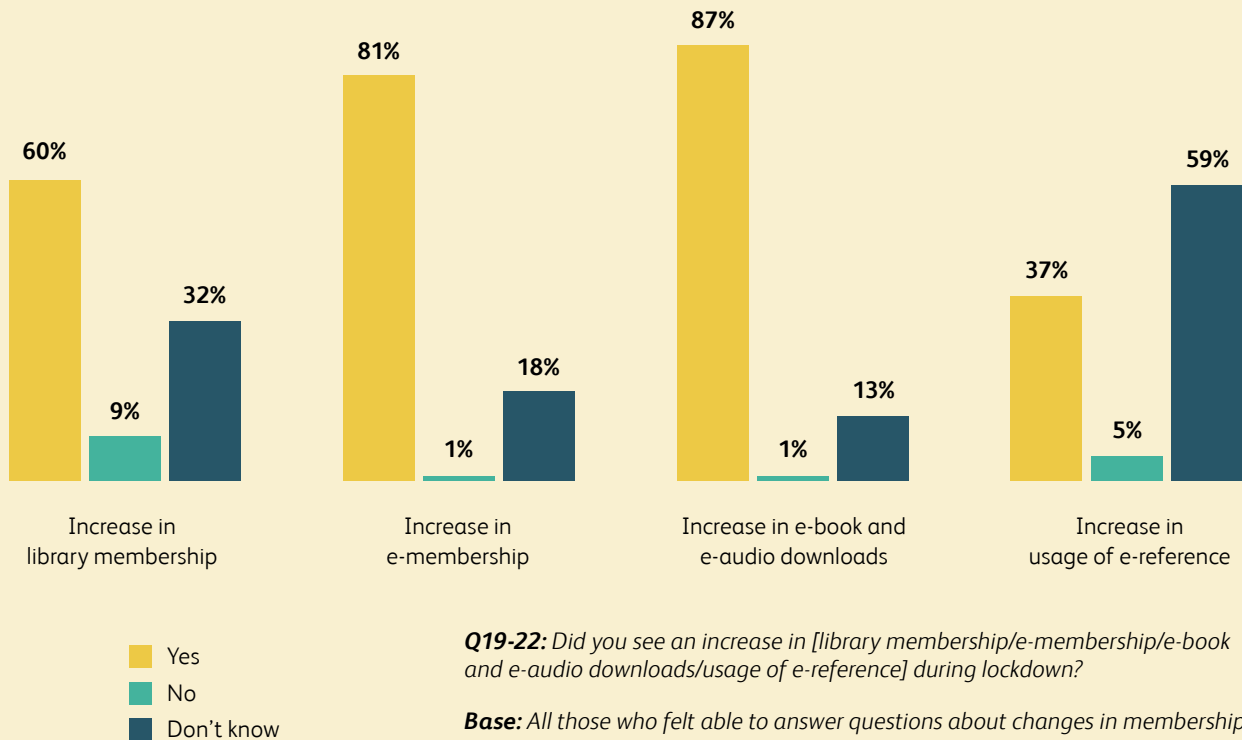
² Services offered a range of examples of this from providing marketing information to local businesses, to local studies.

In terms of digital offers not captured by the graph below, the following activities are just some of the activities mentioned by staff. Whilst some of these items were mentioned a few times, others were mentioned just once. They are shared here to illustrate the range of offers that library services were able to provide: support with home schooling (eg. interactive homework support, help for home tutoring parents and classes for children), creating reminiscence videos to be uploaded to YouTube for care homes, multi-lingual rhyme and story times, author talks, theatre groups, poetry readings, “virtual wanderings” (encouraging people to post photos of walks undertaken individually to prompt online group discussion about the photos, with a view to visiting the places photographed

Public library services’ digital offers during lockdown



Change in public library services' e-membership and in e-book/e-audio downloads during lockdown



together when lockdown eased), videos of landscapes for those unable to leave their home, e-language courses and virtual support for business start-ups.

Respondents highlighted the positive feedback they had received from library users for the digital activities offered, especially those for children and families.

“Residents contacted us to say how much they enjoyed the activities and content we provided.”
 SENIOR MANAGER, ENGLAND

“Our weekly Bookbug Storytime videos have been very popular. It’s attracted a fair amount of interest from unknown people but local families who attended the physical ones before lockdown have been committed to watching and commenting on it.”
 FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

“Facebook live Bounce and Rhyme has been one of the most successful things we’ve done. People have really liked seeing a librarian they know and being able to interact by requesting songs etc.”
 MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

Respondents pointed to the work that library staff put into supporting people to access the digital offer. This included work behind the scenes to enable multiple borrowing of a single e-book or to expand online services usually only available from within the library building to be offered from home, and technical support and video tutorials relating to how to access and make the most of new e-resources. A number of respondents also pointed to the effort that went into publicising the digital offer and their service’s social media presence during lockdown.

PHYSICAL SERVICES

Due to various restrictions placed on public library services, such as buildings being closed to the public, staff access to buildings being limited (or in some cases prevented) and different approaches to book lending during lockdown, the physical service was significantly constrained.

Nevertheless, during lockdown public library services offered a range of ‘physical’ services and 89% of survey respondents said that their library service continued to offer some form of physical service during lockdown. The total number of library services that offered a physical service is likely to be lower due to multiple responses from one service being submitted. The majority of these physical services focused on older and vulnerable library users. The top three physical offers involved calling users/members; calling members over 70; and a home delivery service.

In terms of conducting calls, survey respondents pointed to a range of groups to whom calls were made: older people, vulnerable people, home delivery customers, all users and library service volunteers. Again, the purpose of these calls were described variously as ‘keeping in touch’ calls, ‘wellbeing phone support’, ‘befriending service’ or ‘welfare calls’. Many survey respondents regarded this type of activity as a critical way in which community need was both supported and met during lockdown.

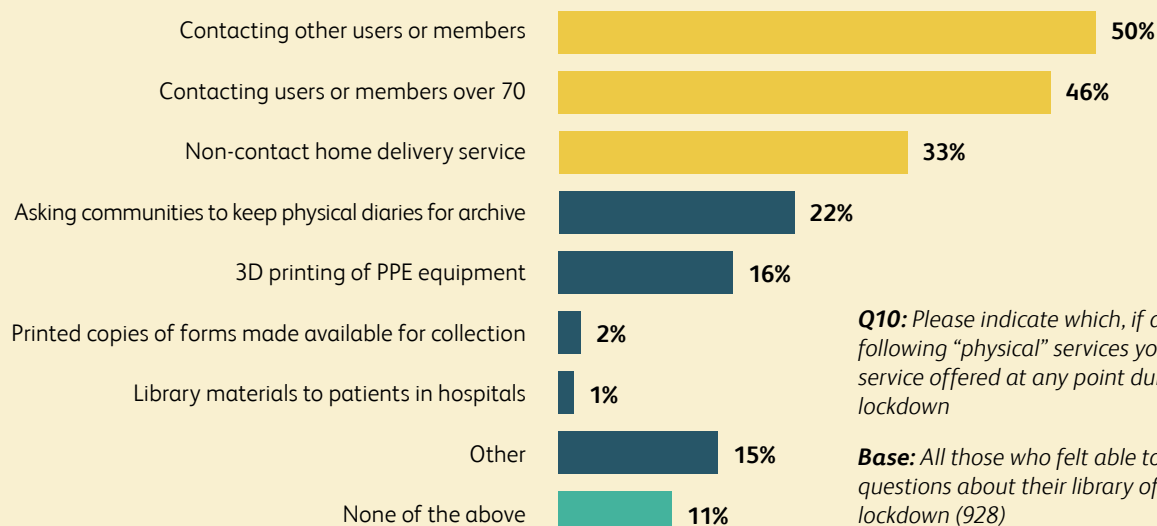
“[Our service] put into place an action plan on how to contact all our customers via telephone or email, checking up on their welfare and wellbeing. [There were] regular weekly call backs to customers, advising them of how we can send volunteers to pick up medication and weekly shopping, doing referrals to other government run organisations for free food parcels and food banks.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

Linked to the phone calls, respondents also pointed to provision of information as a way of supporting members of the public during a confusing and anxious time. Modes of information provision included an enquiry service, signposting and the ‘Ask a Librarian’ service. Some respondents felt that their own service could have done more in the area of support, whilst a few of those that had been active in this area felt that not having one-to-one or more organic opportunities to interact in a digital medium was a failing. A couple of respondents noted that, given libraries’ area of expertise and the nature of the crisis, more could have been done to combat misinformation during lockdown.

In terms of home delivery services, some respondents noted that their service developed and delivered a talking newspaper to be distributed for the visually impaired and others who required this format.

Public library services’ physical offers during lockdown



Q10: Please indicate which, if any, of the following “physical” services your library service offered at any point during lockdown

Base: All those who felt able to answer questions about their library offer in lockdown (928)

A few respondents noted that lending books was supplemented with activities and toys for children for those in vulnerable families. Others delivered books to children's wards in hospitals.



“[We] launched new ‘Libraries Direct’ service providing home delivery of books and toys, friendship calls and digital support by phone to isolated and vulnerable individuals and families.”

SENIOR MANAGER, SCOTLAND

In terms of physical offers not captured by the graph above, activities mentioned by staff include: a poetry plantation where poems were attached to trees that could be visited when lockdown eased, delivery and distribution of health information leaflets (requested by health professionals), a ‘Reading Friends’ programme³ and the range of work staff offered as volunteers or in their capacity as redeployed staff.

Whilst the vast majority of public library buildings were closed, some buildings were repurposed as call centres, community hubs, hubs for children of care workers, and a couple as health and wellbeing hubs for care-at-home and care home workers. One service was able to continue to provide access to PCs during lockdown. Another service appears to have stayed open to enable members of the public to access social welfare payments.

³ Reading Friends is a UK-wide programme that seeks to overcome loneliness through the power of reading: <https://readingfriends.org.uk/>.

TACKLING DIGITAL EXCLUSION

Some respondents noted that effort was made to overcome digital exclusion. One library service managed to keep a few library buildings open in order to enable members of the public who were digitally excluded to use library PCs. They report around 2,000 sessions being taken up per week. Some library services worked with partners to reach those who were digitally excluded (for example, through providing book bags and children's activities via Barnardo's) or to overcome digital exclusion (for example, as partners in the DevicesDotNow scheme or through a tablet lending scheme). Others sought to provide digital skills support for those who had tech but lacked the skills to make the most effective use of it.

Staff Opinion of Services Offered During Lockdown

“With very limited resources I think we did remarkably well.”
FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

This section focuses on staff perception of how well their service performed during lockdown. In particular, it relates to staff views on how well their service sought to understand and then meet community need during lockdown, the reach of their services during lockdown, what they were particularly proud of, what they felt could have been better executed or improved upon, anything they felt did not translate well into a digital context and reflections on the impact of services on user wellbeing.

responses pointed to senior management working hard to understand need, or having an intuitive sense of what communities want having worked with, and for them, for so long.

“We have sought to work with partners (eg. Council Neighbourhoods, Adult services, Early Help teams) to appreciate what people are concerned about. We have made 1,300 welfare calls to older library members and continued a reduced Home Library Service to vulnerable elderly people. We’ve taken account of feedback in social media and responded, particularly in the area of improving mental health and wellbeing.”
MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

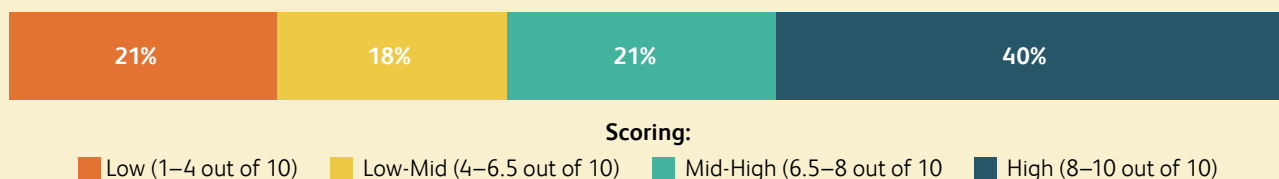
UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY NEED

Overall, survey respondents felt their service had sought to understand what their community needed during lockdown. They gave an average score for effort made of 7.2/10 (0 being poor effort and 10 being substantial effort)⁴. Staff variously pointed to how their service worked with the community or else with community partners, volunteer and community groups or the council to understand what was needed in their communities. Others mentioned how the service was guided by the uptake of offers, customer requests or from feedback gained from phone calls. A couple of

Those that were less sure that their library service had worked to understand community need fed back that there had been limited or no engagement with communities about what services they would like or want during lockdown. Some reflected that it is hard to get a sense of what people really want over the phone; whilst others noted that uptake of services at this time was not properly measured, making it hard to know where appetite and need was. Others, understandably, reflected that it was difficult to communicate with customers during lockdown; that the speed of change made it hard to gauge what was needed; that gathering views from a representative sample of the local population would have been very challenging.

⁴ Scores by jurisdiction are: England 7.4, Northern Ireland 8, Scotland 7 and Wales 6.2.

Effort library services put into understanding community needs during lockdown



Base: All those who answered the question (1069)

MEETING COMMUNITY NEED

On average, library staff felt that their service had done a good job of meeting people’s needs during the Covid-19 crisis, with a rating of 6.6/10 on a scale of poor (0) to excellent (10). Those working in a frontline service were more likely to score generously on their service meeting people’s needs (6.8) than senior or middle managers (6.3) or those in specialist roles (6.4).

It is worth noting that those who gave higher scores for meeting need also reported their service offering a higher number of digital and physical offers than those who gave a lower score in regard to meeting need.

The fact that library services did not provide a consistent offer across the UK or within a given jurisdiction reflected in the responses, which revealed an overlap in a number of activities that staff in some services were proud of; and what those working in other services felt they should or could have done.⁵

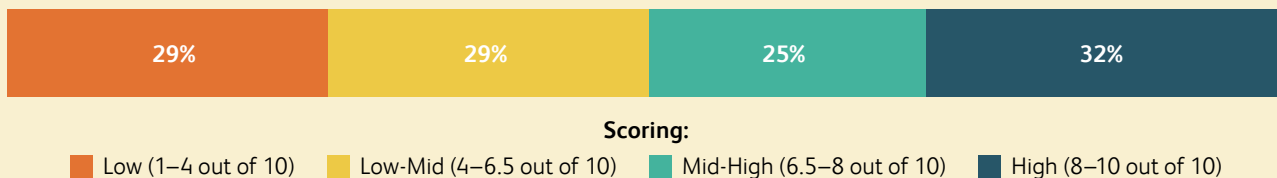
⁵ Scores by jurisdiction are: England 6.8, Northern Ireland 8, Scotland 6.3 and Wales 4.8.

REACH OF SERVICES

Some respondents saw the reach of their library service during lockdown in a positive light. They noted that there were clear library offers focused on children and families (particularly via digital offers) and older people (for example, through telephone calls). The survey shows that some library services also sought to reach: people experiencing poor mental health; people on Covid-19 shielding lists; secondary school children; those using foodbanks; those with a disability; families affected by domestic abuse; people experiencing homelessness and university students.

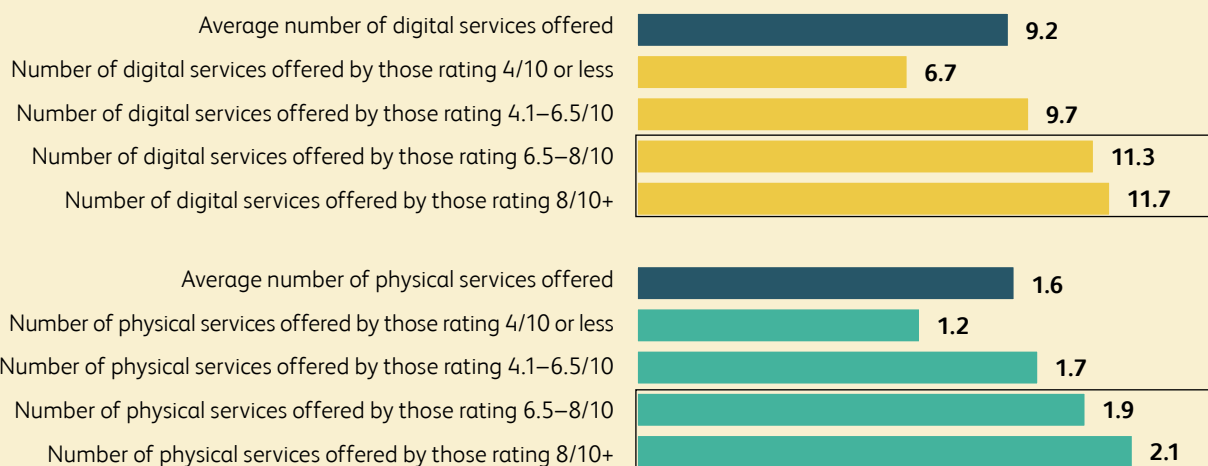
Again, some responses pointed to working with partners during lockdown as enabling the library to join up provision, and reach and support members of the public more effectively. Specific groups that respondents highlighted their library service reaching through partnership work included: people who were digitally excluded (though book bag deliveries, home delivery services or tablet lending schemes), ESOL learners and asylum seekers.

How well library services met community needs during lockdown



Base: All those who answered the question (1069)

Average score given for meeting community need by number of services offered



Base: All those who answered the question (1069)

However, in the qualitative responses, the reach of the library service during lockdown was more frequently pointed to as a way in which local need was *not* met, rather than a way in which need *was* met. Overwhelmingly, (and irrespective of whether they had voiced pride in their libraries' digital offering during lockdown) staff reflected that the digital divide meant that their usual reach within their community was drastically curtailed. Staff expressed concern about library users lacking access to tech; struggling with the skills, confidence or motivation to engage online; or a combination of these. In particular, concern was voiced around reaching those living in poverty, older people, and the most vulnerable and isolated. A few survey respondents mentioned concern with reaching those with visual impairments. Fewer still highlighted ways in which they were seeking to support this particular group during lockdown.

“Most of our customers are vulnerable and unable to access online offers so [we’re] missing a huge part of our client base.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND

“We ... know we’re not reaching a large part of our members and users – those who either don’t use social media or aren’t interested in following the library there.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

“People here are not interested in a virtual world – it’s an ageing population in a remote to very remote rural geography. Patrons are asking us when we’ll reopen.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

“The poor are neglected. A fancy virtual library does nothing for those children without a PC, indeed without a hot meal a day. [We] have a large percentage of pupil premium schools.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

A very few respondents felt that the library offer during lockdown was too much geared towards children and families, or those that might be shielding or older people, meaning that other regular users were being neglected during lockdown.

WHAT STAFF WERE PROUD OF

Those who answered the question about what they were particularly proud of often indicated the work put into developing digital services at pace, and the work done to keep in touch with and support users through phone calls or continued information provision. Staff also often mentioned pride in colleagues, which is described in the later section on staff skills.

Given the tremendous effort that went into e-content and its promotion, it is unsurprising that providing a digital service was what the vast majority of respondents were proud of. Whilst most respondents answered this question by noting ‘digital services’ generally, those who noted a specific activity or offer highlighted: digital offers for family and children, enhanced e-reading resources, book groups, local history storytelling, craft and drawing, online makerspace sessions, wellbeing online workshops, curating Black Lives Matters reading lists, gathering stories from the community about their experience of covid-19 and lockdown, supporting home learning, festival style activities, creating videos, social media content, YouTube channels and Facebook activities.

“[We have] expanded our e-services offer, established a weekly online events timetable regularly viewed by 10,000 people, rebuilt the website landing page, grown FB reach by 300%+”.

SPECIALIST STAFF, ENGLAND

In terms of physical services, many staff pointed to the work conducted to keep in touch with users through phone calls as a point of pride.

“For some this [keeping in touch calls with older folk] was the first call they had received to check if they needed support. We were able to offer information for accessing support with daily essentials as well as health and wellbeing.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

Waiving fines, continuing a home delivery service or conducting book drops (within guidelines), doing outreach to vulnerable families and donating books to community groups were also among things highlighted by respondents as what they were proud of. One or two respondents noted they were proud of using the time

available to compile resources that were non-urgent in the context of lockdown but would be valuable in the longer term, such as compiling Scots language resources.

Some responses noted their pride in printing PPE for hospitals and care homes using the 3D printers they usually used for maker and learning sessions. In one area, the library had delivered 5000 pieces of PPE before the Government had been able to send out 1000. The library service in question went on to deliver scuba mask valves to the local hospital and visors to paramedics, over 60 care homes, the Red Cross and undertakers. The library service was depicted among the photographs selected for the Historic England national archive of '100 pictures representing lockdown'.

Some responses answered the question of 'what are you proud of' in relation to partnership working to meet community need, or continuing to pay partners despite the challenging financial circumstances.

Things that respondents were proud of but that were mentioned only once or twice include using data to identify literacy hotspots, providing 1:1 business clinics, assistance with applying for universal credit and blue badges and wellbeing online workshops. Providing digital support for accessing the library offer and digital skills more generally, were also services that respondents to this question were proud of.

WHAT STAFF FELT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER

Staff who scored their library service lower on meeting community need were often staff whose services offered less digital and physical offers than others during lockdown. As such, respondents to this question often listed things they knew others to be doing, such as phone calls, better provision of information or online activities. Some respondents were clearly frustrated that they were unable to continue a home delivery, doorstep or order and collect service during lockdown. In terms of a home delivery service, there was palpable confusion and frustration over whether or not it was possible or advisable to deliver books/conduct a home delivery service during lockdown. Staff also felt differently about this on a personal level: some felt the risk of Covid-19 meant it was best not to develop this type of service. Others were frustrated and felt that they were being 'shown up' by community groups doing book swaps and the private sector's ability to provide book or food delivery services during lockdown.



"They [services] were pitiful. We should have done more creative thinking about how to utilise our staff and resources."

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

In some responses to the survey, there was a palpable sense of frustration and a feeling of having been restricted in being able to deliver a library service during lockdown. Covid-19 related regulations, staffing (due to redeployment or furlough), finances and IT were all pointed to as limiting what was possible. In terms of the role of local authorities, the low priority that the council placed on public library services was noted in a few responses, as was the library service's lack of voice at a senior level in the council, as inhibiting the ability to provide a better response. In terms of IT, respondents highlighted issues such as staff not having access to tech (or being granted access to it taking time) or being unable to access the library or council systems offsite. The standard of technology provided by councils or available to them personally during lockdown, was also mentioned as preventing staff from being able to deliver a better service. Likewise, permission to use certain software had an impact on the type of interaction library staff were able to have with members of the public, with some commenting that not being allowed to use zoom or skype due to IT restrictions was frustrating when that was the software through which library users wanted to engage with staff or the service.


Some staff also pointed to the lack of staff skills and how lacking knowledge of particular platforms and/or knowledge of how to facilitate sessions online through these platforms, compromised their ability to do more. A combination of issues around availability, access and quality of tech and associated skills led some respondents to observe that their digital activities were more 'broadcast' than interactive in nature. (For example, posting videos on YouTube rather than running Facebook Live or zoom sessions.)

In terms of developing digital services, it appears that the majority of services had branch libraries generate their own digital content and promote these efforts. In contrast, only a few respondents mentioned that their library service reposted others' digital content. Decisions to take the second approach included a lack of resource and capacity, or knowledge that others were creating digital content, thereby freeing time up to focus on creating a few high quality video tutorials on accessing e-resources.

Both approaches had pros and cons. Some respondents felt that there was a 'pull' factor for library users who wanted to see a known and friendly face of the local library staff – the 'hyperlocal' face of the library, council or public service. Indeed, a few respondents who did not create their own content felt that reposted story and rhyme times had limited uptake because they lacked the community connection that a familiar face could give. However, others questioned the quality of the hyperlocal content produced and were less sure about the visibility and uptake of the offer at a time when there was so much digital content already available. In terms of the services that were offered digitally, a few respondents noted that it was hard to benchmark what 'good uptake' of electronic resources and activities was and a few also noted that some video content didn't have good uptake. As a middle manager in Scotland put it, "feedback has been great but uptake disappointing in some areas".

In terms of staff experience of creating digital content, some appreciated the level of autonomy that they were given to create, whilst others would have liked more guidance on what was required and what 'good' looked like to ensure a more consistent and ordered approach.


A few respondents observed that the poor discoverability of their digital services meant that the ability of library services to reach people was compromised. As one member of staff observed:

 **"The e-library was not marketed effectively – only if you happened to go onto Facebook or the council website page would you have known [it was there]."**

FRONTLINE STAFF, WALES

Similarly, some pointed to the need to advertise and advocate for the service beyond their own social media channels. Another respondent noted that social media was 'swamped' over lockdown with a plethora of appealing content from a range of organisations, including storytimes with celebrities, and what the library produced was a little lost in this. Others noted that there had initially been a huge appetite for digital but that this had begun to wane.

Consideration about what could have been better led to a few reflections from respondents about 'next time', such as:

 **"I would...like to see plans in place for real books to be distributed ... and customers visited (from a safe distance) face-to-face."**


FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

In terms of the digital offer, one Senior Manager in England summed up the situation as follows,

 **"There is balance to be had between efficiencies of scale and ensuring quality through national initiatives and maintaining the digital offer as a local offer".**

SENIOR MANAGER, ENGLAND

WHAT STAFF FELT DID NOT TRANSLATE INTO A DIGITAL CONTEXT

 **"Ours is quite a deprived area and my contact with the community is [currently] through our Facebook page; I'm not convinced I'm seeing the same people ... I see in the library itself. Users of the library on a day-to-day basis are not simply coming for books...For those who are looking for reading material, online resources are great and we can guide people with online interaction. But this isn't a direct equivalent to what we do in our library from day to day. I do feel overall that the readers are well served and the online provision has been responsive and generous. However, our own community and probably others like it are unlikely to find the "safe space", the human interaction and the help they often look for when they come into the branch."**

FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

The above quote encapsulates the three key themes into which the majority of responses to the question of what didn't translate into a digital context fell: reach; quality interaction and support; and physicality. As noted above, these issues also played out in the context of a number of challenges that staff experienced in the actual delivery of a digital service. As reach is covered in a previous section, the focus of this section is on quality interaction and support, and physicality.

Quality interaction and support



“Communities have missed physical libraries, we have a place in supporting our communities that cannot be filled digitally.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND



“Our reading scheme, where children come in and tell us about their reading in exchange for stickers and badges at milestones, [didn’t translate to a digital context]. We tried it over email but people really want the physical interaction so it didn’t work.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

The nature of interactions that digital facilitates, compared to a physical set up, was seen as constraining by many respondents.

For example, some respondents noted that it was entirely possible to run a story or rhyme time well online. However, this was a limited offer: children were unable to see one another and engage in this way, and parents were unable to chat with each other at the end of a session. This latter point was something that respondents felt was important for the mental health of parents. In this way, digital had shifted an activity that had a range of wellbeing benefits in the flesh, to a form of children’s entertainment. Whilst seemingly ‘the same thing’, the digital and physical offers were, in fact, not commensurate offers. This perhaps reflects a wider sense that came through many of the responses; namely, that the ability of public library services to curate a social and interactive experience that supports communities did not translate fully to the digital realm.

A number of respondents pointed to face-to-face and one-to-one engagement and social interaction as translating poorly into the digital context. What appeared to underpin these responses was a sense that the informal interaction that is part of a structured activity or public libraries as ‘bumping spaces’ cannot be replicated in a digital context.

For example, some responses reflected on the type of support library services provide through being a safe space that offers the opportunity for unstructured encounters and conversations through which staff

can identify someone who needs support and offer the appropriate signposting or support. This perhaps reflects how the public library building is an outreach service in itself, where staff can approach and support those who are unsure or uncertain about making the approach for help themselves. Linked to the way in which different forms of interaction didn’t translate well to the digital realm, is the fact that many respondents noted that combatting loneliness and social isolation did not translate well to the online context. This reflects a wider sense that the digital-only format prevented the public library service from acting as a ‘service of first resort’ and from supporting those that were ‘borderline’ vulnerable.

On a different note, some survey respondents noted that offering digital support was tricky. They expressed the challenge in supporting people with tech over the phone, where it was not possible to see the tech or the screen that the person calling for help had in front of them.

Physicality



“You can deliver online events but nothing beats ‘live’ events”

SPECIALIST STAFF, ENGLAND



“The need for many is to come in and have ... face-to-face contact, and that has not been fully possible to replicate.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

The physicality of the library space, the appeal and benefit of in-person interaction, physical resources and the value and energy of ‘live’ events were seen to translate poorly into a digital context. Indeed, the closure of library buildings was noted by many respondents as a key reason why they were unable to fulfil community need: the lack of a safe, physical space for face-to-face interaction and where physical resources such as books or IT equipment could be accessed being seen as integral to the library offer. Many also pointed to the lack of homebound delivery and mobile services at this time.

Even those who offered opportunities for contact and interaction over the phone or digitally felt that these offers didn’t – or couldn’t go far enough.

“People get in touch to say they miss physically coming to the library – we are a small community and a big part of it.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

“Those who are most in need are probably those who have lost the most from our physical buildings being shut.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

Interestingly, reading groups and Lego clubs were two activities that were mentioned a few times as not translating well in some library services. (Although this was not universal and they appeared to work very well in some services.) Some of the reasons given for this include how regular attendees of book clubs don't have digital access, issues with tech and copyright permissions – and that it was hard to establish a new group during lockdown itself. There is perhaps also something particular about physical books and Lego, as the following quotes suggest:

“During my time manning the Covid-line, which is to get food to shielding and vulnerable people, I've had them ask, ‘Where can I get books? Books are what keep me young, and my mind awake.’ These are people who DO NOT want an e-Book.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

“Though we posted a weekly [Lego club] challenge, we got very little response – which leads me to think that it's the access to actual Lego that makes this activity popular in our physical libraries.”

SPECIALIST ROLE, ENGLAND

“E-books are good but we need to give people access to books and literacy because some parents may not be literate themselves and cannot read to their children – those children need schools and libraries to access reading and books – this should be a human right and not just for those who have access to digital resources.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

A couple of responses reflected concerns around screen time or queried whether children were getting 'sick' of screen time over lockdown. Meanwhile, others noted that they had been contacted by users who were keen to know when the library would reopen.

STAFF PERCEPTION OF SERVICES OFFERED ON USER WELLBEING

The survey did not ask directly about the impact of library services on user wellbeing. Nonetheless, a few respondents reflected on this. Some examples of observations are as below:

“Many customers have described our many remote services as “lifeline” that have seen them through dark days of lockdown.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

“Phoning vulnerable borrowers has been one of the most effective ways we've supported our communities, with many people being very grateful and commenting on the positive impact it has had on them.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

“I've been involved in the [library] friendship calls and I know from feedback that this has made a big difference to people. On one call a girl with several health issues mentioned she had no electricity. She lived alone with care workers visiting at different times. I was able to pass this information to the hub and local volunteers arranged to get her power card topped up. When I spoke with her the next day she was like a different person. She hadn't known who to contact so the fact of this problem being sorted for her lifted her mood.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

“Reading has been an important part of well-being during lockdown.”


FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

“Reading, story building and creativity have been a bedrock of national wellbeing during the covid crisis.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

Our public polling data on use of and benefits accrued from library services during lockdown is published in a [separate report](#) and provides more comprehensive data on the wellbeing impacts for people using libraries during lockdown.

Enablers and Inhibitors to Successful Service Delivery in Lockdown

 **“It’s always easier to see things in hindsight and this is an unprecedented event and we also had to protect staff and public, so it [the nature of response] shouldn’t be seen as a failing – just a learning curve.”**


FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

It is important to bear in mind that whilst library services, councils and devolved and national governments assess and handle risk day to day, for many of those who were dealing with service delivery at this time, the pandemic posed an unprecedented type of risk. Throughout lockdown itself, narratives around what did or did not mitigate risk were sometimes confused or unclear. Given this context, it is important to recognise that library services were in very different places in terms of how risk was interpreted and handled, and therefore, what they were able or enabled to deliver. The factors discussed in this section emerged through responses to open-ended survey questions. They were regarded as having the potential to be either enabling or inhibiting factors to successful service delivery during lockdown.


ATTITUDE TO RISK WITHIN A LOCAL AUTHORITY

Attitudes around whether it was possible or desirable to run a non-contact home delivery service often rested on how comfortable people were managing risk. For example, through supporting staff to access the library buildings and to work safely to deliver this service, quarantining stock and ensuring non-contact delivery. Where those services were offered it was clear that they were appreciated by the recipients, whilst being unable to offer this service was often frustrating for those that could not provide it.

Different approaches to managing risk in relation to GDPR was also an area where differing attitudes made it either possible or impossible for a service to identify and contact potentially vulnerable library users over the phone.

 **“We were not allowed to contact vulnerable members of the community for fear of breaching GDPR. We were not allowed to offer a home delivery service for fear of contamination. All we were allowed to do was post activities and information on our Facebook pages, mostly directed at children. No effort was made to provide services for people who do not engage with us online or have no online access.”**

MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND

 **“I would very much liked to have kept the home library service operational but our Council was insistent on staff not being at work.”**

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND


Attitude to risk in relation to IT also impacted on whether staff were able to deliver a type of digital service that enabled ‘face-to-face’ interaction or engagement via chat functions alone.

 **“We were hampered by the public favouring zoom [in delivery of digital services] but our local authority did not permit us to use this.”**


MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND

EXTENT OF UNDERSTANDING WITHIN A LOCAL AUTHORITY OF WHAT THE LIBRARY SERVICE DOES AND HOW IT CAN CONTRIBUTE


Whether or not library services were allowed to manage and navigate risk to deliver a variety of services during lockdown often related to the extent to which a council fully understood and appreciated what the library service might offer at this – or indeed any other – time.

 “We received praise from senior managers of the County Council for our “can-do” attitude, adaptability and dedication.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND


 “Most of the time very senior council staff do not see the potential for libraries to help deliver their agenda at a reduced cost, which will help the communities we all serve.”

SENIOR MANAGER, ENGLAND


 “I think the impact libraries have on our wider community has been largely ignored. Direction of library staff and resources into more varied community roles is an option that doesn’t seem to have been considered.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

Whether or not the contribution of public library services was recognised appeared to be reflected in how far councils supported or showcased what was available.

 “I wish our local council could have supported our efforts by promoting the service and our lockdown efforts – we even had a new section build up on the council’s website – but our services are not highlighted in updates and press releases.”


FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

 “The council doesn’t really support our efforts in terms of promoting what we offer and this does make things difficult at times and continues the difficulties that the community may experience accessing information.”


SPECIALIST STAFF, ENGLAND

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE IN THE LIBRARY SERVICE


Whether or not library staff felt they had a voice or the ability to shape the library service during lockdown could affect the type of service that was delivered during lockdown. In some services it was clear that frontline staff were regarded by management as being close to their communities and therefore as having ‘an ear to the ground’ in terms of what those communities may need or want. In other services, this was less clear. As will be discussed later, having a voice was also linked to feeling valued and so this also impacted on staff wellbeing.

 “The idea of doing welfare calls to our older users came from a member of Frontline staff. We took it on and made around 8000 calls.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND


 “I hoped that as everything changed [with lockdown] my ideas for adapting the service would be considered seriously and my managers would present many of their own ideas which I could feed into. Unfortunately lockdown just seemed to magnify the existing culture in my organisation of saying that we don’t have time to do anything and that we cannot [do things].”

SPECIALIST STAFF, ENGLAND

 “I have felt limited by the library service I work for – there is little understanding or support for use of social media.”

SPECIALIST STAFF, ENGLAND

In some cases it appears that staff took the initiative and delivered without the acknowledgement of managers:

 “Some frontline staff members contacted vulnerable customers off their own initiative. Not endorsed or recognised by management.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Some survey respondents pointed to how well managers had supported and led staff teams during lockdown. These responses noted how management had set clear expectations of the work to be carried out – and how it should be carried out. They also often pointed to how managers ensured regular contact with staff, offered support with mental health and created opportunities for people to engage with one another regularly.

A handful of responses from frontline and middle management staff reflected the opposite of this, with one respondent saying that they had no contact with their line manager for three months.

“Do not feel been given very much guidance on what we should have been doing... struggling to do some things when suggestions put out as did not have the tech at home to do things ... lack of guidance has led to anxiety with a number of staff.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

“[t]he lack of leadership and direction from my senior managers ... has made it difficult at times to stay motivated as there is no accountability ... I care about libraries and want to do my best... .”

MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND


BALANCE AND FOCUS

There were a handful of comments that indicate both pride in how library staff and the service pivoted to support other services and pressing needs during lockdown, but also how this perhaps compromised the ability to deliver a ‘library’ service at this time.


“We do feel that our lock down offer would have been even better developed if we had not been totally immersed for two months running a serious visor production line [with the library service’s 3D printer].”

SENIOR MANAGER, ENGLAND

Staff Skills in Lockdown

 **“We’ve identified talent in our team that we didn’t know we had.”**

SENIOR MANAGER, ENGLAND

 **“I think that the way that library colleagues have responded to lead, shape and deliver a new service ie. food delivery and contact centres has been great. It has demonstrated staff’s ability to be adaptable and that library work has key transferable skills. I have also been impressed with the development of the library service online during this period.”**

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

Public library staff are an integral part of library services. They embody the values and ethos of the service and service delivery rests on staff skills and attitude. It is notable that a number of responses to the question of ‘what are you most proud of’ articulated the pride felt in the skills, adaptability and attitude of library staff. This was both in relation to staff who continued to work in the library service and those who worked in redeployed roles. However, some responses explicitly referred to redeployed staff or staff volunteering in other services or organisations as a way in which the library service had – through its staff, rather than the library offer – met the needs of the community.

The staff survey drew on the skills listed in CILIP The Library Association’s Professional Skills and Knowledge Base framework to gauge which skills of library staff came to the fore during lockdown, be that within the library service or among those that were redeployed. The findings reveal that some of the specialist outreach services implemented in lockdown by local authorities required or mimicked the core skill set that

library staff utilised day-to-day pre-Covid-19 in order to offer support to their library users. Specifically, customer service, learning and support, information and knowledge management, working in new teams and adaptability.

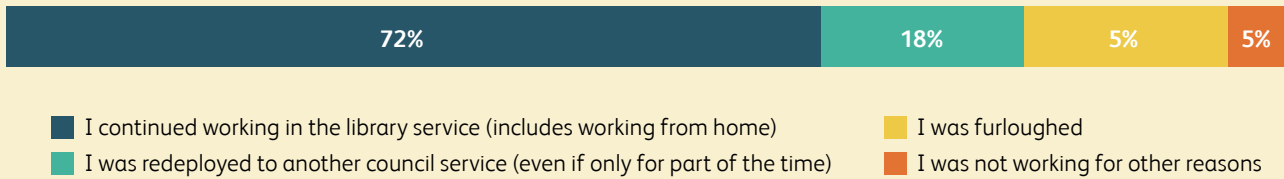
The findings also indicate a lack of key digital skills and media and PR skills prior to lockdown – and to a lesser but still significant degree, post-lockdown. Findings around strategy and leadership could be interpreted as reflecting a working culture where leadership, advocacy, innovation or partnership development are regarded as the domain of particular roles rather than collectively owned and jointly held responsibilities.

WHERE STAFF WORKED DURING LOCKDOWN

In terms of survey respondents, 70% of respondents continued to work in the library service during lockdown, whilst almost 20% were redeployed and 10% were not working during lockdown. It is perhaps worth noting that six percent of those who stated that they were redeployed also worked in public library services during lockdown. In terms of those who were working within the library service, just over half who responded to the survey worked from home, while 1/3 still worked from the library or office during lockdown. 40% of frontline staff worked in the office compared to 23% of senior managers.

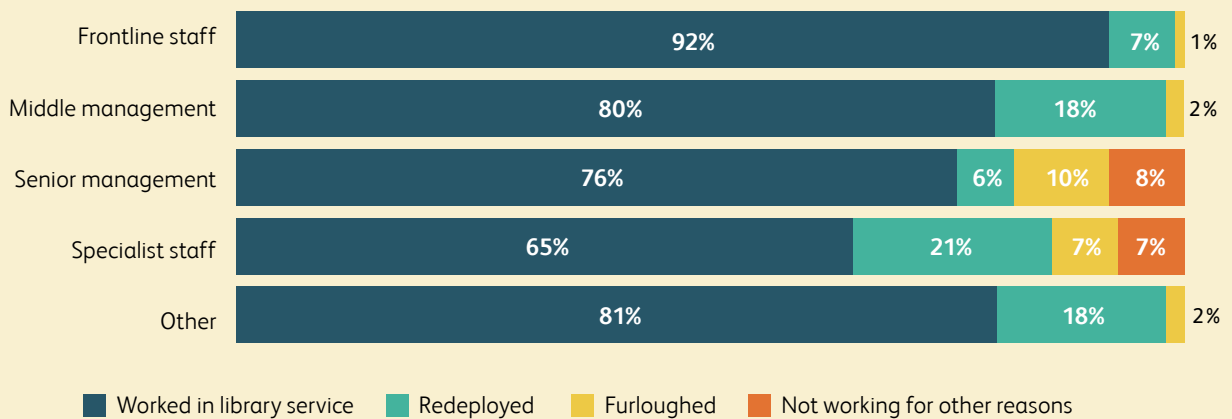
Frontline staff were most likely to be redeployed, whilst staff in specialist roles were more likely to continue working in the library service. Staff who were redeployed worked across a wide range of service areas, with a particular focus on supporting vulnerable people and co-ordination of services.

Library staff: nature of work during lockdown



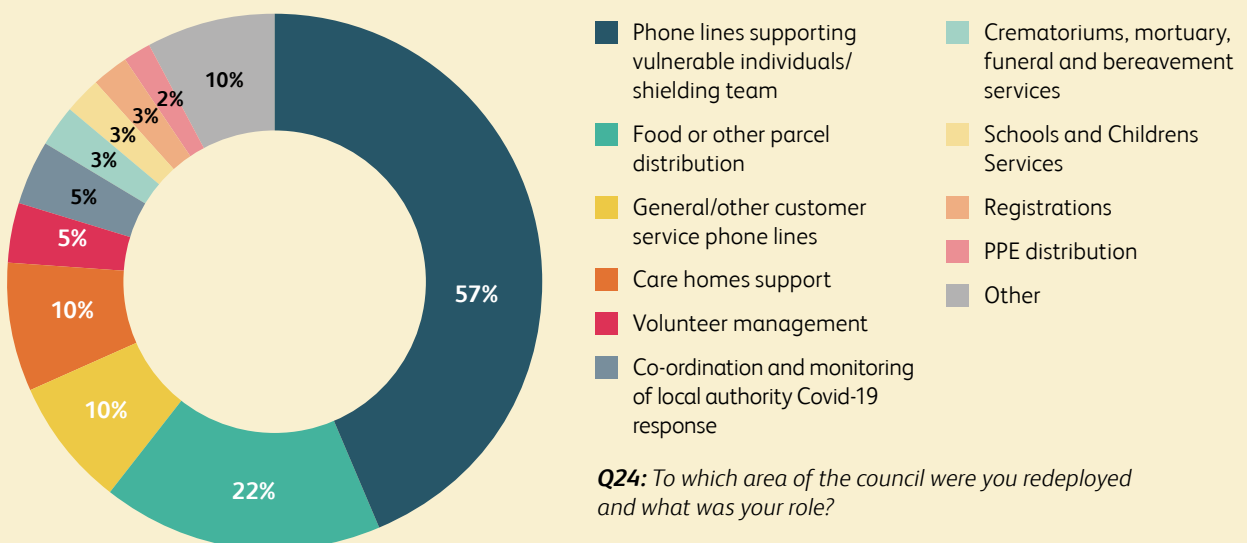
Base: All those who answered the question (874)

Place of work during lockdown by role



Base: All those who answered the question (874)

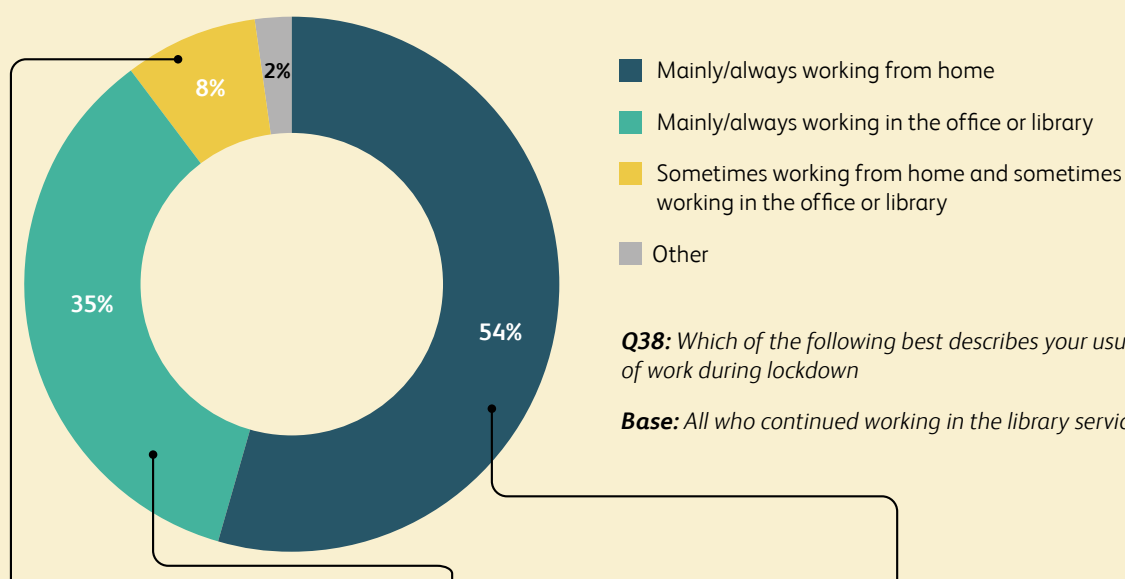
Place of work during lockdown: redeployed staff



Q24: To which area of the council were you redeployed and what was your role?

Base: All redeployed (153)

Place of work during lockdown: library staff working in the library service



Q38: Which of the following best describes your usual place of work during lockdown

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Analysis shows that **18%** of senior managers worked in both the office and from home, reflecting their supervisory role in setting up Covid-19 compliant workplaces

Analysis shows that **40%** of frontline staff always worked in the office vs only **23%** of senior managers

Analysis shows middle managers were most likely to work from home (**58%**) and frontline staff least likely (**52%**)

Base: All who continued working in a library service (656)

CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS

“I spoke to one lady for one hour on the [council] COVID-19 line She thought I was a trained mental health nurse, which was really complimentary. Working in a library we are used to listening to vulnerable, lonely people.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

During lockdown, staff who continued to work in public library services drew on customer service skills less than staff who were redeployed, despite having drawn on these specific skills prior to lockdown. This is perhaps indicative of how customer service and support/community engagement occurs through interactions when library buildings are open, with the online service providing much fewer opportunities for interaction.

In contrast, those that were redeployed drew heavily on a pre-existing skill set of empathy, general customer service skills, and identifying and supporting vulnerable people, with over 90% of redeployed staff utilising empathy and general customer service skills, and over 2/3 drawing on skills to identify and support vulnerable people. This points to how some of the specialist outreach services implemented in lockdown require or mimic the skill set that library staff utilised day-to-day pre-Covid-19 in order to offer support to their library users and to meet the wide range of needs of these users.

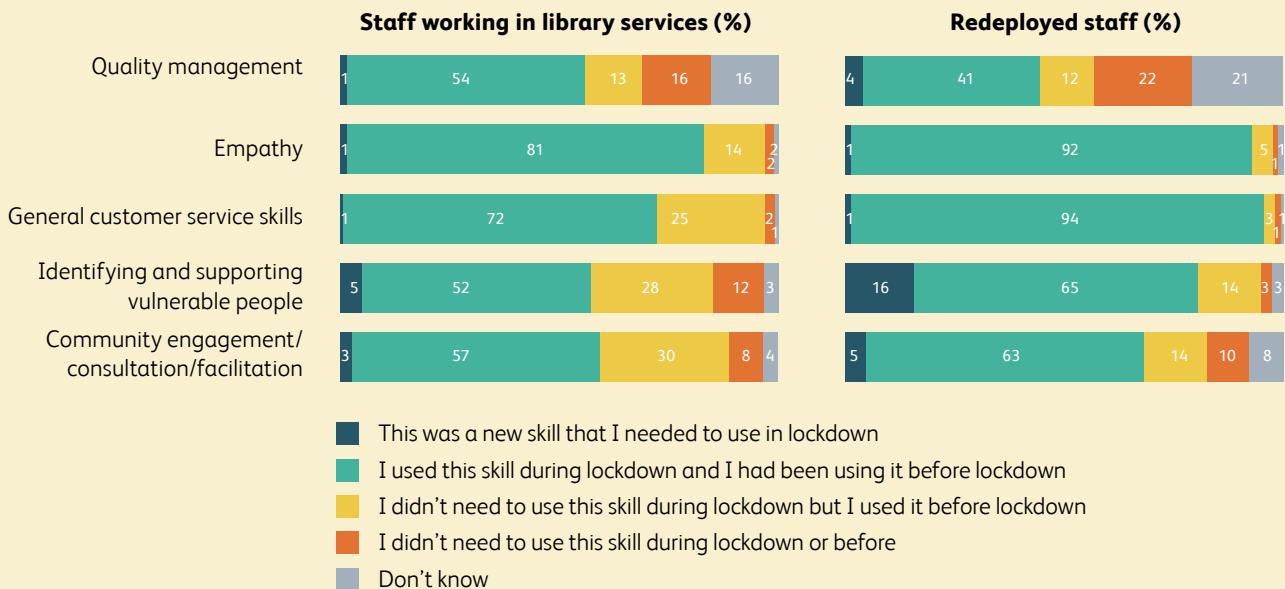
Indeed, it came through in the qualitative responses that there was a sense that library staff were very well placed in regard to handling calls on Covid-19, shielding or council support phone lines – albeit staff were handling more extreme cases than they normally would in a concentrated period of time.

“[I am] proud that many staff used their existing customer service skills to transfer to making phone calls to transfer to making phone calls to vulnerable and shielded people very quickly and with little training.”
FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

“Many library staff were redeployed to the Council’s shielding response team and helpline. Their skills in talking to people, gaining their confidence and offering help and support were highly valued.”
SENIOR MANAGER, ENGLAND

“Large proportion of library staff have been redeployed to the Covid-19 response hub. They are call handlers, case managers and case officers. Existing customer service skills have been very beneficial to the hub and shielded community.”
SPECIALIST STAFF, ENGLAND

Customer service skills



Q40: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not. Community engagement and customer service skills

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Q26: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not. Community engagement and customer service skills

Base: All redeployed (153)

LEARNING AND SUPPORT SKILLS

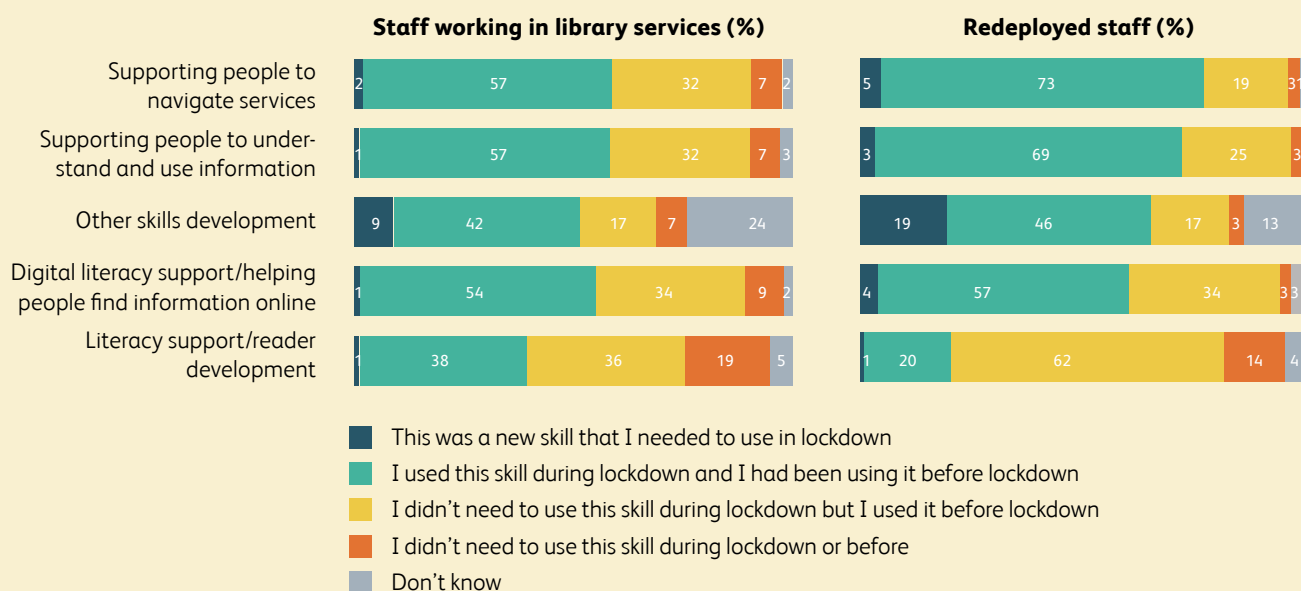
Around a third of survey respondents who remained working in the public library service were not utilising core skills that involved supporting people to navigate services, supporting people to understand and use information and providing digital literacy support or helping people to find information online, despite this being something they did prior to lockdown. This perhaps reflects the role that public libraries play in providing this type of support in-person and the limitation of the online service offer in being able to deliver this type of support.

However, these same learning and support skills – supporting people to navigate services, supporting people to understand and use information and providing digital literacy support or helping people to find information online – **were** utilised by those who

were redeployed. As with customer service skills, the majority of staff who were redeployed used these skills prior to lockdown as well as during it. Again, perhaps this indicates that some of the specialist outreach services such as information and support hubs and call centres, implemented in lockdown, strongly reflect the skill set that library staff utilised day-to-day pre-Covid-19.

It is perhaps worth noting the decline in the provision of literacy support during lockdown: 36% of staff that remained in library services had not used this skill during lockdown despite having used it prior to lockdown and 62% of redeployed staff used this skill prior to lockdown but not during lockdown itself. The potential impact of this decline in provision of literacy support is as yet unknown.

Learning and support skills



Q43: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: learning and support skills

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Q28: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: learning and support skills

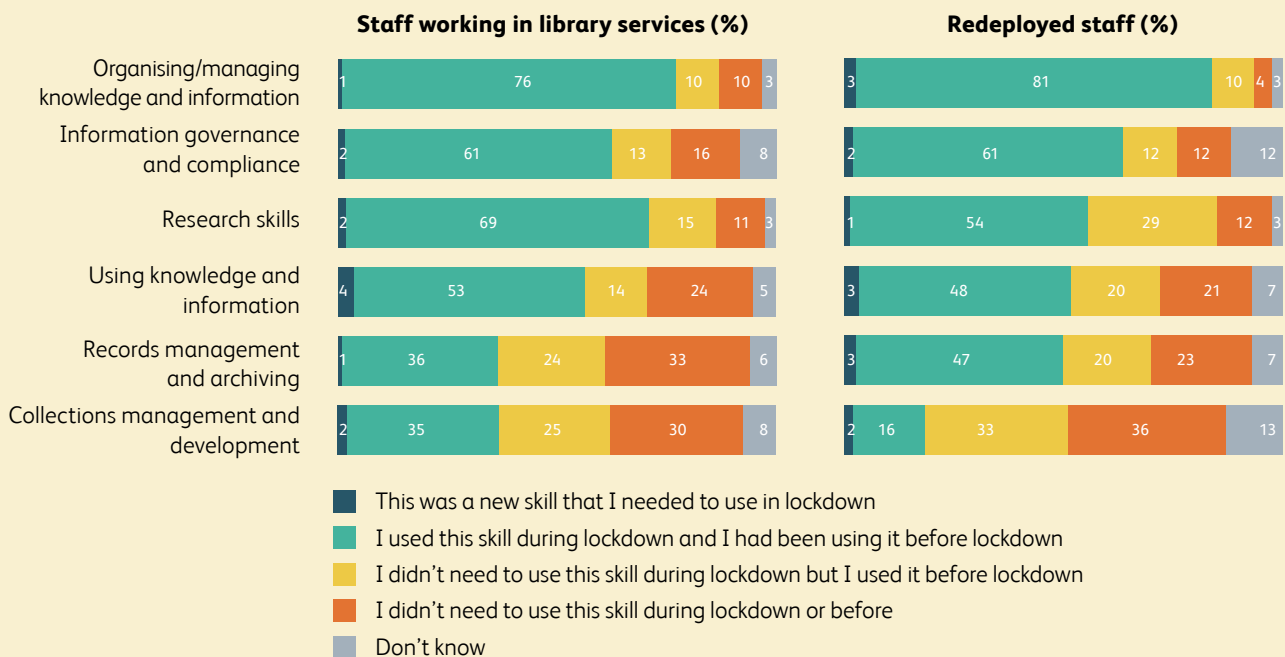
Base: All redeployed (153)

KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION SKILLS

81% of redeployed staff drew on their prior skill of organising and managing knowledge and information in their new posts, whilst 61% drew on prior skills of information governance and compliance. Around half of redeployed staff drew on pre-Covid-19 skills of using knowledge and information, records management and archiving during lockdown. These statistics reflect the transferability and importance of information management skills and the importance of core library skills in organising responses to crisis. In the report that summarises interviews with 22 Heads of Service, there are some case studies that illustrate how these skills were drawn upon.



Knowledge and information skills



Q46: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: knowledge and information skills

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Q32: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: knowledge and information skills

Base: All redeployed (153)

ADAPTABILITY SKILLS

Irrespective of whether they remained in the library service or were redeployed, staff drew on the skills of adapting to new ways of working, with only 2% that remained in the service and 1% of those redeployed stating they did not need to draw on this skill. Interestingly, 31% of those that remained working in the library service said that adapting to new ways of working was a new skill they had to use in lockdown compared to only 25% of those that were redeployed. This perhaps reflects the number of frontline staff who were redeployed to broadly familiar frontline type work, whereas those that remained in the service were more likely to be working in unfamiliar ways – delivering remote services, working and managing remote teams whilst working from home.

“We were forced to work in a different way but overall this was a benefit. We didn’t say no to new ideas and we tried new things without worrying about success or failure too much. We were able to give things a go.”

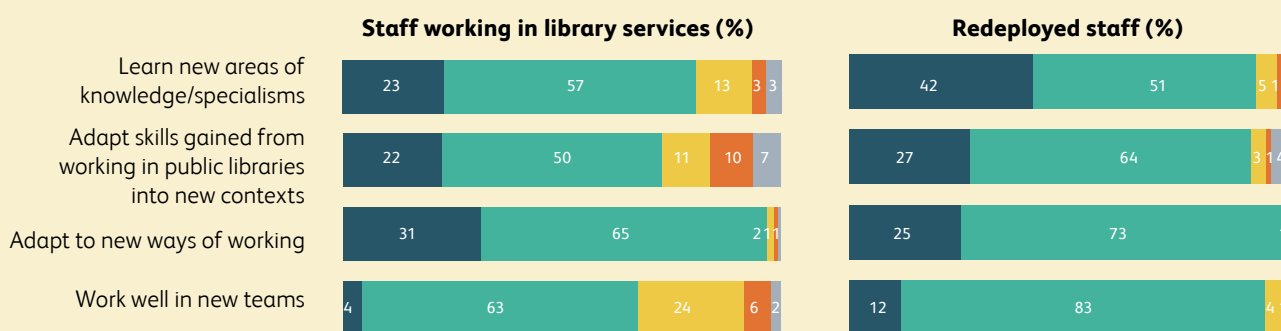
MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

Unsurprisingly, staff that were redeployed were more likely to require the skills of learning new areas of knowledge/specialism for the first time compared to those that remained in the library service. Likewise, 95% of redeployed staff used the skill of working well in new teams compared to 67% of staff who remained in services and where nearly a quarter of staff had previously utilised the skill of working in new teams, didn’t need to use them during lockdown. This perhaps indicates that team working and adaptability – two core skills for required in local authority efforts during lockdown – were skills that public library staff were broadly well versed in.

“We have loaned some staff to other council essential services eg. waste collection, refuse tips, call centres, food banks, community hubs and our staff have been commended for displaying ... excellent customer service and teamwork skills.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

Adaptability skills



- This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown
- I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown
- I didn’t need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown
- I didn’t need to use this skill during lockdown or before
- Don’t know

Q41: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: adaptability

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Q27: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: adaptability

Base: All redeployed (153)

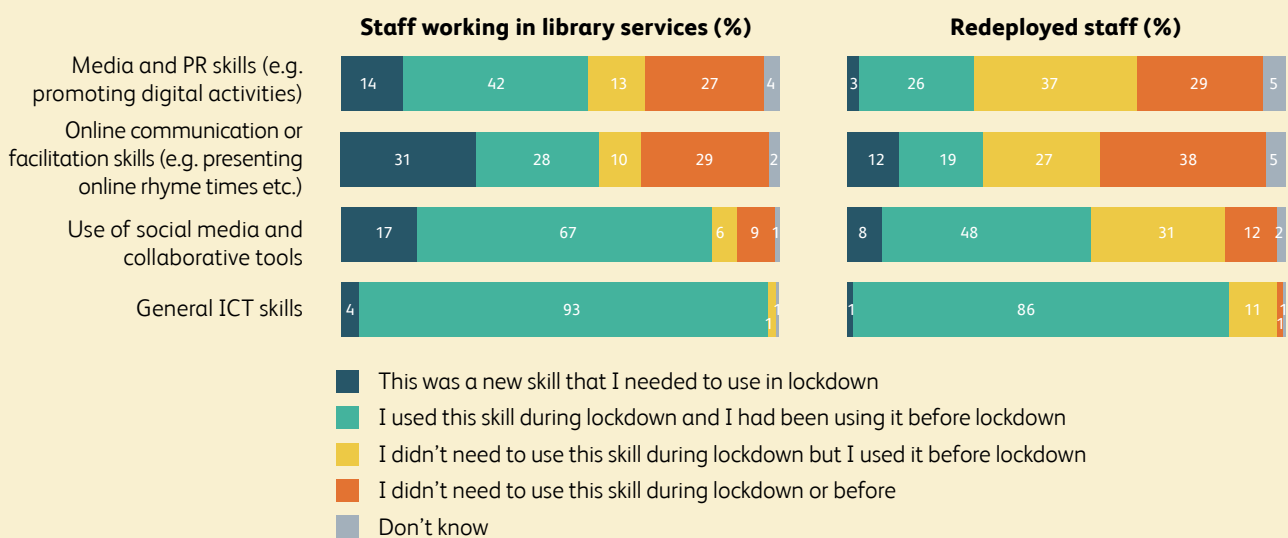
DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND ICT SKILLS

Staff who remained in the library service were much more likely than those who were redeployed to draw on their digital skills. This is perhaps unsurprising given the amount of effort placed on developing online library services during lockdown. It is worth noting that in terms of online communication and facilitation skills, 60% of staff did not have prior experience of drawing on this skill, with 31% developing this skill in lockdown. Again, 41% of staff had not drawn on media and PR skills prior to lockdown, with 14% using this skill for the first time during lockdown. These statistics perhaps reflect staff’s sense of both the effort and leap taken during lockdown to develop a digital service, conveyed in the qualitative responses.

It also points to a significant lack of digital skills in the workforce prior to lockdown and to some extent, post lockdown with 29% stating that they didn’t need online communication or facilitation skills before or during lockdown. Some of the qualitative responses reflected that the lack of staff capacity or staff skills in relation to digital was an issue during lockdown.



Digital communication and ICT skills



Q42: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: digital communication and ICT skills

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Q29: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: digital communication and ICT skills

Base: All redeployed (153)

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

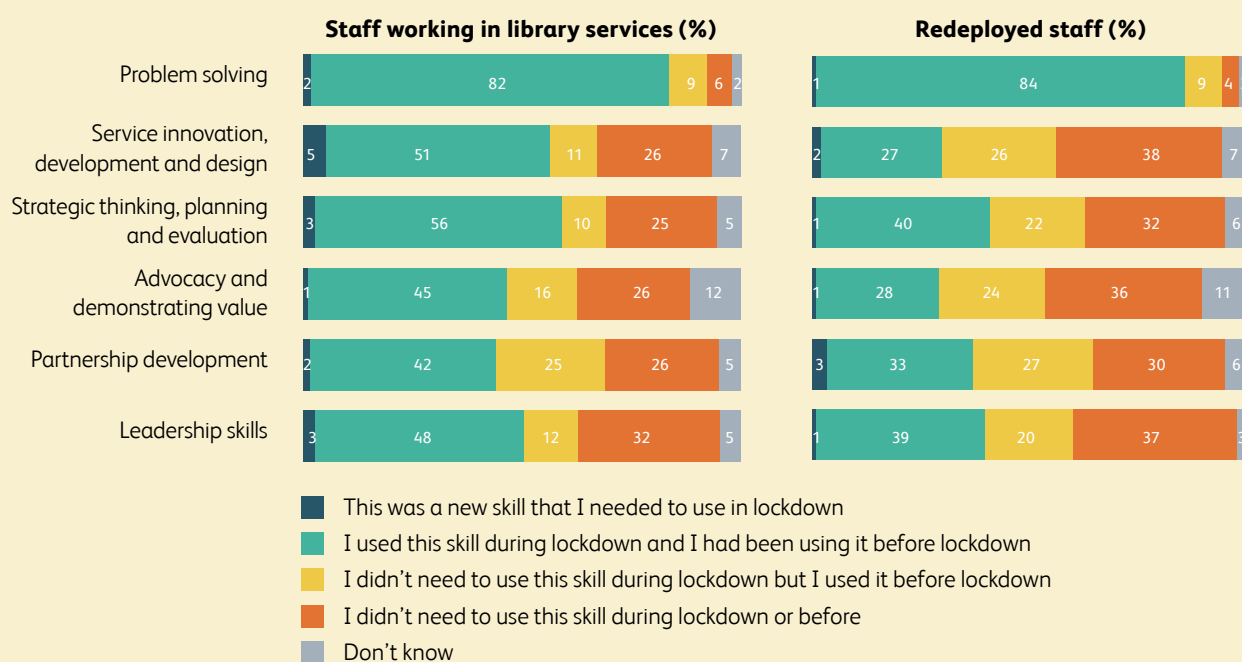
Staff across the board drew heavily on problem solving skills during lockdown and it is clear that this was a skill that the vast majority of staff had used prior to lockdown.

Staff that remained working in the library service were more likely than redeployed staff to draw on the skills of problem solving, service innovation and development, strategic planning and thinking, advocacy and demonstrating value, partnership development and leadership skills. Given that managers and specialist staff were less likely to be redeployed and were effectively in charge of designing a public library service for lockdown, this is perhaps to be expected.

However, it is noticeable that whilst 42-56% of staff in library services drew on these skills during lockdown and had used them before, at least a quarter of staff reported not using these skills either during lockdown or before it. Whilst this does, of course, relate in some extent to role, it perhaps also points to a working culture that doesn't enable leadership at all levels, or encourage a sense that advocacy, innovation or partnership development are collectively owned and jointly held responsibilities – or it may reveal a workforce that lacks confidence in those areas.

A very few responses pointed to frontline staff being unwilling to take on tasks that are seen as outside of their remit. For example, one senior manager in Scotland fed back, “[There has been] resistance from some staff to help out with community services that they see as not within their remit or they were apprehensive about working in”.

Strategic leadership and service development skills



Q44: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: strategic leadership and service development skills

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Q31: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: strategic leadership and service development skills

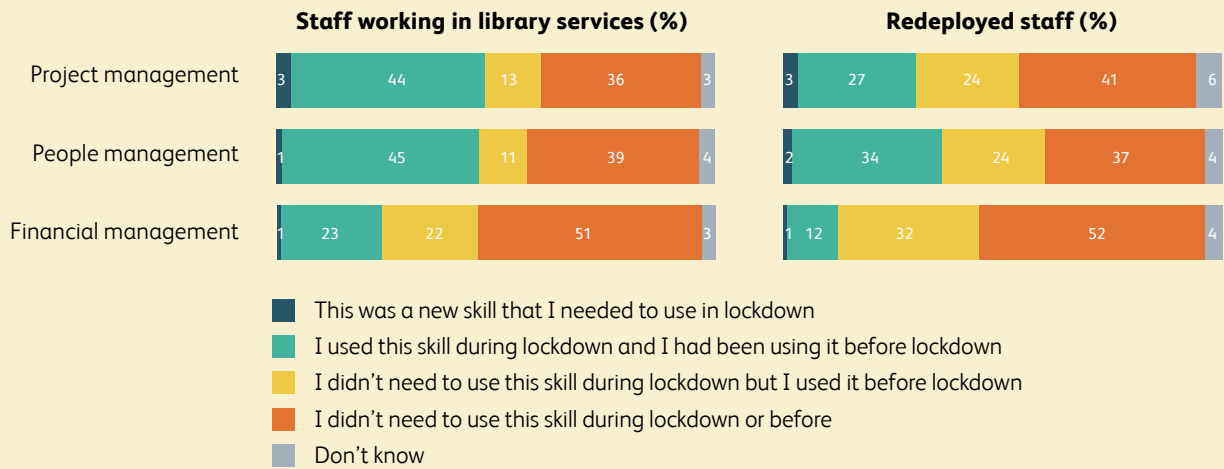
Base: All redeployed (153)

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Staff that remained in library services were more likely to draw on project management, people management and financial management skills than those who were redeployed. Again, those that were redeployed were less likely to draw on these skills, despite having used them prior to lockdown. This perhaps reflects the earlier finding that managers were less likely to be redeployed than frontline staff and that those who remained in the library service were more likely to be shaping and managing services and teams during this time.



Management skills



Q45: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: management skills

Base: All who continued working in the library service (656)

Q30: Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not: management skills

Base: All redeployed (153)

APPETITE TO DEVELOP NEW SKILLS

There was strong appetite among staff who continued to work during lockdown to continue to develop their skill set, irrespective of where they worked. There was huge interest in new ways of working, especially in relation to social media, adaptability, taking on new areas of knowledge/specialisms and service innovation, development and design. There was also a very strong interest in further developing community engagement skills and skills in working with vulnerable people.

The appetite for new ways of working and service innovation perhaps reflects the desire to explore and expand new ways of working that lockdown introduced and necessitated. The community-focused skills may be a reflection of staff wanting to engage with the need they have seen around them but have been unable to support, or redeployed staff seeing the depth and scope of vulnerability to which they were exposed during lockdown.

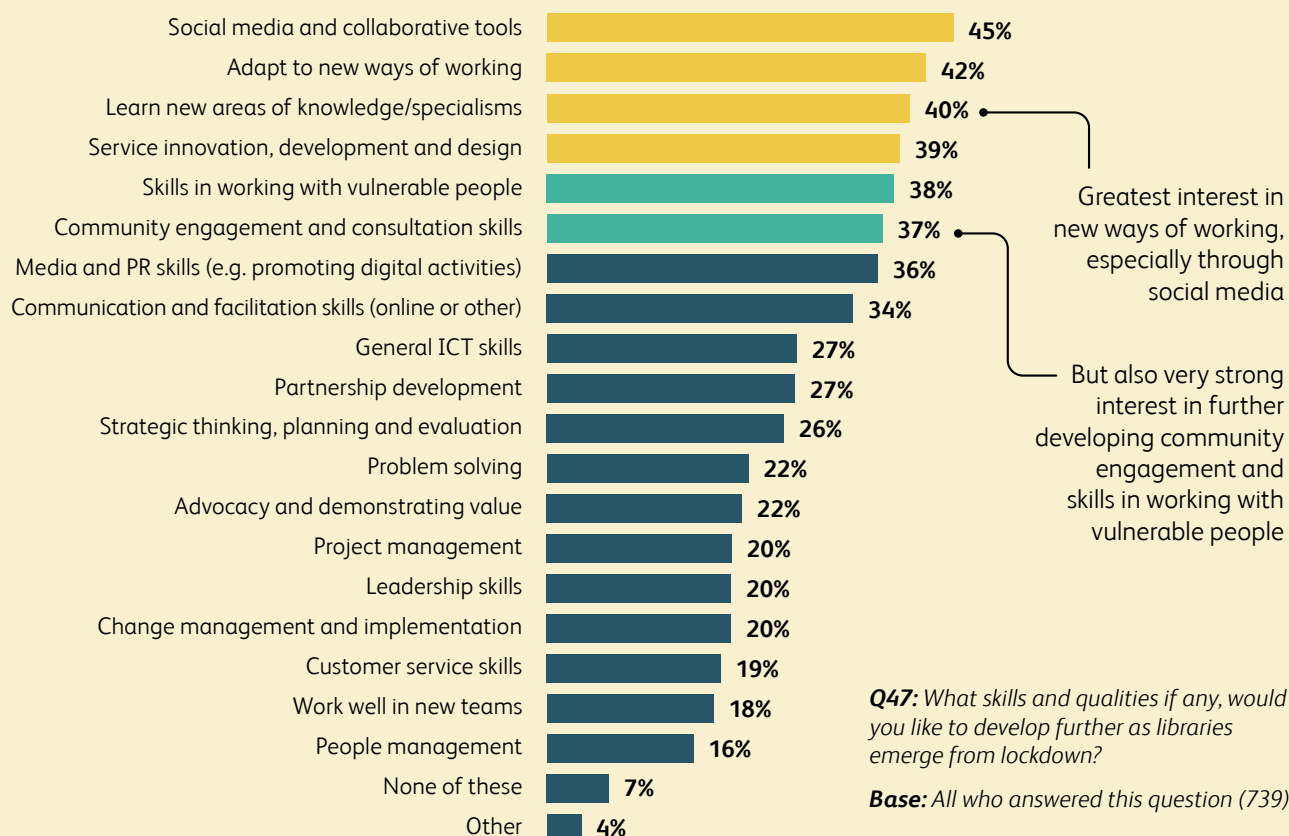
Whilst the top development priorities are similar across those who were redeployed and those who worked in libraries, the order of priority given by these two groups perhaps provides insight into the different focus these groups had in lockdown.

Skills that staff were keen to cultivate that were listed under the 'other' category included those that relate to planning (scenario planning and financial planning), advocacy (social media, PR, advocacy) and those that relate to working on the front line (person-centred skills, empathy, working with vulnerable people and working with people who have addictions).

The rationale given for why respondents were keen to develop new skills fell under five broad categories:

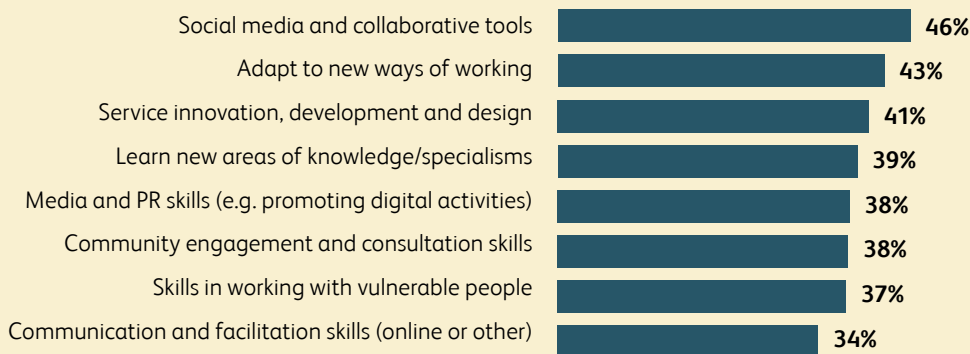
- To better help and support the community (and specific segments therein).
- To better help the development of the future library service.
- To promote innovative or effective ways of working.
- To support/work with staff better.
- For personal/professional development.

Staff appetite for skills development

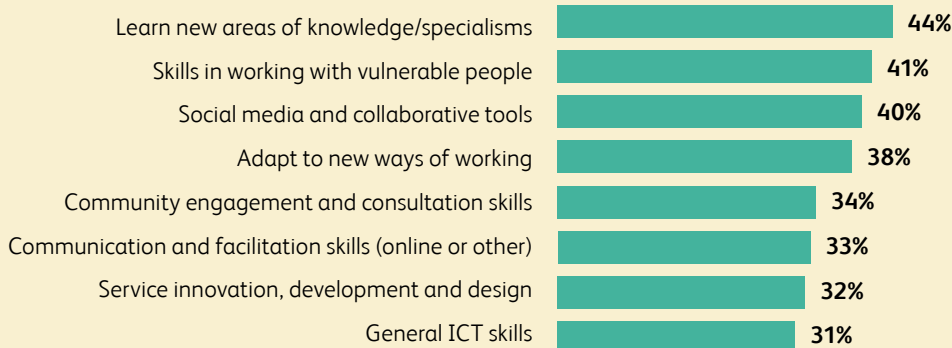


Staff appetite for skills development by place of work during lockdown

Staff working in library services



Redeployed staff



Q45: What skills and qualities if any, would you like to develop further as libraries emerge from lockdown?

Base: All answered this question (739)

It is clear from the verbatim responses how committed some library staff are to serving the communities with which they work and their belief in the library service to improve people's lives.

“[I would like to undertake further training] to always be able to respond to and to meet the needs of service users.”
FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

“Libraries have a changing role in communities and there will be a lot of change over the next few months/years. Need adaptability/change management and other skills to enable this.”
FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

“I am genuinely excited about what we can do in the library service and would love to see us move forward, further informed by our lockdown experience.”
FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

OTHER

Whilst staff enhanced skills through working during lockdown, be that within or outside the service, some services also sought to use lockdown as an opportunity to enable staff to develop skills via training.

“We have continued with staff development delivering training on video conference instead of classroom based, we have continued with the recruitment of apprentices and interviewed via teams.”
“OTHER” ROLE, ENGLAND

Reflecting on the skilled contributions of library staff during lockdown to the development and delivery of other services, one survey respondent observed as follows:

“I think our teams were amazing at helping people and really maybe we should be the responders who organise the helping hands in the future.”
MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND

Staff Experience of Lockdown: Personal Circumstances and Ways of Working

The qualitative responses reveal the raft of emotions that staff experienced during lockdown and their different personal circumstances and working environments. Some felt inspired and energised by the challenge that Covid-19 posed and expressed their own, and others', ability to deliver above and beyond during this time. Others felt isolated, overwhelmed and uncertain. Again, some found working at this time enjoyable, whilst others struggled. In some instances, staff from the same service had very different experiences of working during lockdown, which appeared to impact on their perception of their service during this time. It was not unusual for respondents who shared their experience of lockdown to cite both positive and negative experiences. Words such as 'emotional rollercoaster', an experience with 'pros and cons' or 'good and tough days' being used.

Personal circumstances had a role to play in responses, with some staff reflecting on juggling home-schooling or caring for young children with work and other caring responsibilities and concerns, whilst others were on their own, feeling anxious and isolated. It appears the concerns and pressures external to work were felt quite intensely and impacted on staff wellbeing and how able they felt to fulfil their roles during lockdown.

Beyond personal circumstances, ways of working and working culture appear to have had a significant impact on staff experience. It appears that having a sense of purpose or of being useful, feeling supported by managers or a wider team or contact with members of the public contributed to a positive experience or working during lockdown – irrespective of where it was that staff were working. As such, whilst the survey did not ask about ways of working or working culture, this emerged as a key theme. In particular, purpose, voice, autonomy, empowerment, clarity/leadership, and understanding and appreciation – or a lack thereof – in relation to the library service or the council more widely, emerged as key factors impacting on both staff wellbeing and staff perception of how well their library service was able to deliver for communities during the pandemic.

In terms of specific groups that were most likely to say that they had a positive experience of working during Covid-19, overall, staff that were redeployed were more likely to say they had a positive experience, whilst those not working had the least positive experience.

Staff experience of lockdown by occupation during this time

Redeployed



Working in library service



Furloughed/not working for other reasons



- It was a mainly positive experience
- It was neither particularly positive nor negative
- It was a mainly negative/difficult experience

Q25: Which of the below most closely describes how you felt about your experience of working in another service during lockdown overall?

Base: All redeployed (153)

Q39: Which of the below most closely describes how you felt about your experience of working in the library service during lockdown overall?


Base: All working in library service (659)

Q49: Which of the below most closely describes how you felt about your experience of not working during lockdown?


Base: All not working (86)

STAFF WORKING IN THE LIBRARY SERVICE


Those who had a more positive experience of lockdown mentioned a sense of purpose, of being able to contribute or be useful, supportive colleagues and/or good working relationships. Words used included 'enjoyable', 'useful' or 'rewarding'. A few explicitly mentioned learning new skills and enjoying homeworking. Good working relationships were picked out in different ways, including good internal communication, the ability to speak with colleagues and wider teams regularly albeit virtually, clear guidance and leadership, working as a team or 'pulling together' or 'helping each other out', professionalism and drawing on good organisational skills.

 **"Feedback from staff who are at home with underlying medical conditions but are generally fit is that supporting the delivery of online Bookbug, storytimes, writing tasks etc has been great for their mental health and sense of purpose."**


MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND

 **"I was most emotionally content myself when I felt useful to other people who were struggling throughout the duration of this lockdown period."**


MIDDLE MANAGER, SCOTLAND

 **"Working kept me focused and gave me a sense of usefulness that contributed to my wellbeing during lockdown."**

SPECIALIST ROLE, ENGLAND

 **"[I am proud of] our positive, inclusive, compassionate, upbeat, creative team spirit."**

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

 **"Managers made sure their staff were OK at every step without bombarding them with emails every two minutes."**


FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

Those that had a more challenging experience working for the service mentioned poor internal communication, a lack of support (either from their managers, the library service or the council) be that in terms of wellbeing or providing clearer guidelines about what to do or what it was possible to do. Some noted that they would have appreciated having more of a voice in how decisions were made about what

services were to be delivered during lockdown or in redeployment. Respondents who noted non-inclusive decision making linked this variously to a way in which community need wasn't met, or else wasn't met quickly, or to a negative experience/having a negative impact on their personal wellbeing during lockdown.

A few respondents explicitly mentioned feeling frustration at not being able to do more, or missed opportunities to support communities during this time and to demonstrate the value of the service. Others mentioned missing face-to-face interaction, colleagues, library users, handling stock and the buildings. Words used included 'stressed', 'intense' and 'anxious'. A few staff mentioned specific home circumstances, caring responsibilities or health or mental health issues and disabilities that meant homeworking in an isolated context during a global pandemic and without the right set up was challenging.

STAFF THAT WERE REDEPLOYED

 **"Glad that I could make a contribution and use transferable skills for the roles I undertook."**

FRONTLINE STAFF, ENGLAND

Those that were redeployed also had varying experiences of work during lockdown. Those that had a positive experience pointed to it being rewarding, feeling valued, having the opportunity to learn what they were good at and being made welcome by the teams they joined. Some also mentioned having their eyes opened to the challenges that some individuals and colleagues in other council departments face.

Those who had a more challenging experience mentioned missing their library colleagues, steep learning curves, feeling underqualified, the work being emotionally difficult, concern about letting others down, poor team dynamics or management, and having their resilience tested. Again, IT and tech, either due to lack of connectivity, hardware or ability to access the necessary council networks were sources of frustration for some.

STAFF THAT WERE NOT WORKING

Due to the range of reasons given as to why staff were not working during lockdown, from furlough to health conditions to caring responsibilities, it would be misleading to put forward a common set of factors that informed how staff that were not working felt.

The Future Service

“I think that after this crisis, the community role of libraries will be even more important: as centres of trustworthy information (especially health information), spaces where people can develop the skills to help themselves, and as somewhere people can trust they will receive a warm, compassionate and non-judgemental welcome.”

SENIOR MANAGER, ENGLAND

The survey invited staff to share their views on where they saw their service making the biggest difference to people’s lives in the months and years to come. Given the role public library services play in supporting communities, and the various societal challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic has illuminated, the question sought to ascertain whether there was a consistent or shared vision for the role of the service among staff in the emerging context. Crucially, it sought to elicit views from staff working across the service, irrespective of role. The survey elicited views on a future service by posing an open question. Thematic analysis revealed that the majority of staff responses considered this question in relation to four broad categories: the focus of service delivery, the mode of service delivery, ways of being and ways of working, and concerns for the future of the service.

FOCUS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

“[We need to be] a community hub where people feel their lives are enriched both intellectually and emotionally.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, WALES

“[We need to] continue to inform, include and inspire.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

In terms of the focus of services, the list below outlines the most popular overarching categories (in alphabetical order) into which views fell:

- Community hub/supporting social relationships and interaction/combating isolation
- Culture
- Digital access and skills
- Economic wellbeing
- Education/learning
- Equality, equity and inclusion
- Health and wellbeing
- Information and decision making (including signposting)
- Reading

It is worth noting that these are all areas in which public library services currently make a significant contribution. However, as a number of staff observed, the current context has sharpened both community need for support in these areas and the need for their own service to deliver more in that particular area.

Perhaps because of the current context, of those areas listed, supporting interaction and connection and support with digital access and skills came through most strongly. Respondents wrote variously of the role of the public library service in ‘building community’, ‘community integration’ or a ‘sense of togetherness’, ‘supporting the community’ or ‘bringing people together’, or of being a ‘community centre’ or ‘community resource’. Equally, the pressing need for a physical space in which people can access technology or gain skills and confidence in using digital technology was noted by many as critical, and concern about the digitally excluded during lockdown was noted in one or more open text responses throughout the survey. However, supporting economic wellbeing and information, reading and literacy, and health and wellbeing also came through strongly in the responses.

The nature of the responses reflected the interwoven nature of the categories listed above. For example, social connection and health were often written of as interlinked. Again, support with literacy or reading was acknowledged as supporting mental health through a range of mechanisms, be that in relation to the

documented benefits of reading for enjoyment, book groups that bring people together (and so combatting isolation), or bibliotherapy. Reading and literacy were also referenced in terms of learning and education. Finally, the way in which some responses were phrased made it clear that equality and equity in terms of equal access to opportunities or social inclusion were implicit objectives rather than ones to be stated explicitly.

MODE OF SERVICE DELIVERY

In terms of staff who responded to the question of the future service in terms of the mode of delivery, staff regarded the following ways of delivering a service as key to consider and develop:

- Physical space
- Digital services
- Library at home service
- Mobile service
- Order and collect service

Most staff whose response to this question referenced digital or physical services, were explicit about the need to offer both types of service. Those who responded in relation to the library at home service often did so with particular reference to the need to provide a service to the most vulnerable or those that will need to continue to shield as lockdown eases. In terms of the order and collect service, some saw this specifically in relation to the current context whereas some referred to this in terms of being a useful way to extend the service in general.

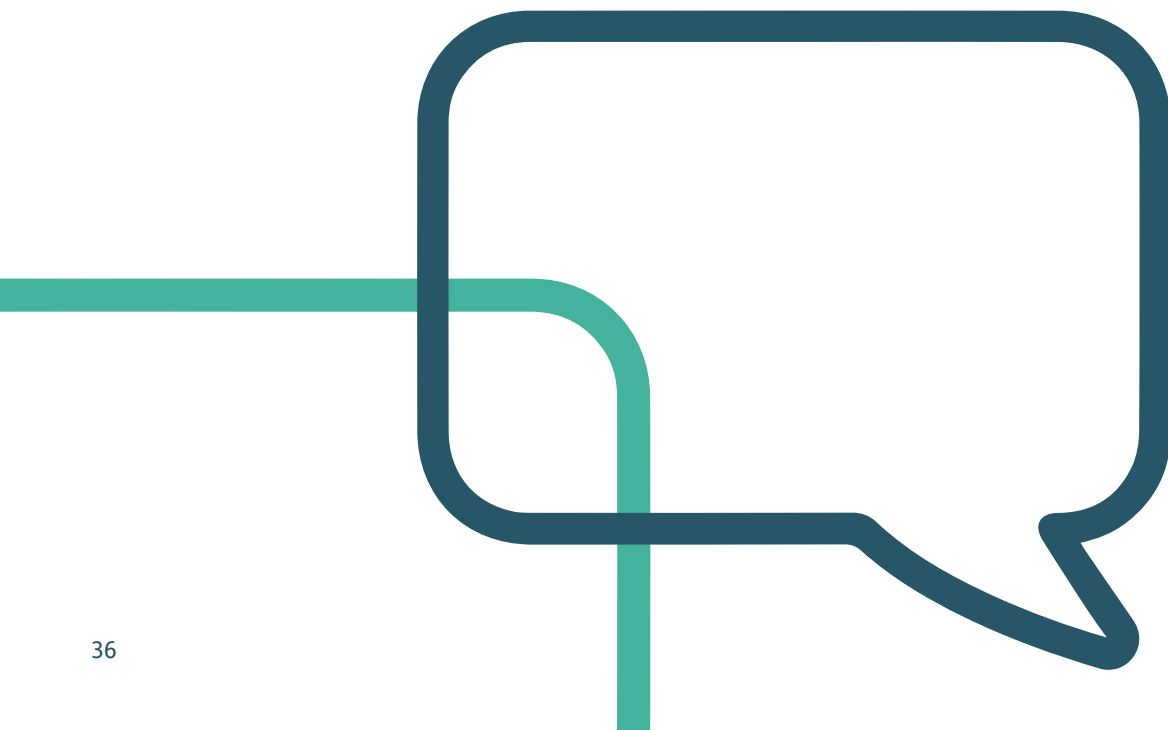
WAYS OF BEING AND WAYS OF WORKING

In terms of the ethos, or how the library service should 'be', welcoming, warm and safe were key words that were repeated across a number of responses. Being neutral, non-judgemental, friendly, empathic were also noted. In terms of being welcoming, staff were often clear that the service should be for all. For some, whilst the service should be for everyone, regardless of background, they thought that it was important to have a particular focus on one or more of the following groups: children, families, the elderly, the 'vulnerable', disabled, those with additional needs, the blind, the lonely, the isolated and/or the disadvantaged. A few respondents pointed to the need to engage more with people who don't use the physical space but would engage with the digital space.

In terms of ways of working, there was a focus on being responsive and relating or connecting more with communities and partners. In particular, respondents noted the need to:

- adapt to need/be responsive;
- be more involved with the community;
- build on partnerships; and
- forge new partnerships.

Being able to offer a personalised, flexible, one-to-one and face-to-face service were also mentioned as important principles for library services.



LOOKING AHEAD

Whilst some staff felt optimistic about the relevance and role of the public library service in the months and years to come, there was also nervousness about whether funding, political support or a lack of understanding among decision makers of what the service does, could be barriers to the essential role services could play.

“We only have the capacity to do the basics and support pre-existing digital offers. All our recent changes and reduction will make coming out of lockdown or developing new approaches harder.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

Others noted the need to shift public and decision makers’ perception about what libraries do and their purpose. Related to this were other responses pointing to the need for effective advocacy.

“We still need to promote our services more than ever but we need to focus on why and not what we do.”

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT, SCOTLAND

“It would be great if the message can be put forward more strongly with governments and public bodies about how central a role libraries can and do play in mental and economic health.”

SPECIALIST STAFF, SCOTLAND

Whether or not staff articulated concern about the future of their service in light of possible reduction in services due to financial constraints, they reflected that keeping the service open, or maintaining the pre-lockdown level of service in some form or another was essential in light of what library services are and can provide communities moving forward:

“Keeping the service open is vital to people [here] as there is a high level of poverty. It is the only way that some people can access PCs, books etc.”

FRONTLINE STAFF, SCOTLAND

“Continuing to be a beacon of non-judgemental support, reliable information, signposting and friendship. Job club support. Later on when we are able, providing a place to go and activities and events which people can attend regardless of their financial circumstances.”

MIDDLE MANAGER, ENGLAND

Appendix: Survey Questions

PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF SURVEY ABOUT EXPERIENCES OF THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Carnegie UK Trust survey about Libraries and Covid-19

This research is looking at how public libraries across the UK have helped and supported people and communities across the UK during lockdown.

We want to use this information to help raise the profile of libraries' contributions during Covid-19 and to better understand the role public libraries could play in supporting individuals and communities during the rebuilding process following on from lockdown. We also want to find out and share learning across the sector about challenges and what did and didn't work.

We want to hear the views of all library staff, including frontline staff, managers and heads of service.

Your responses will be anonymised and subject to aggregate analysis.

We appreciate that you are all very busy right now but hope you can find 10 minutes to complete this survey by Friday 3 July.

ABOUT YOU AND YOUR SERVICE

1. Name of your service:

***2. Jurisdiction:**

- England
- Northern Ireland
- Wales
- Scotland

***3. Please select which of the following best describes your role:**

- Frontline staff
- Middle management
- Senior management
- Specialist role (e.g. children's librarian, archivist etc.)
- Other (please specify)

LIBRARIES IN LOCKDOWN – OVERVIEW OF THE SERVICE

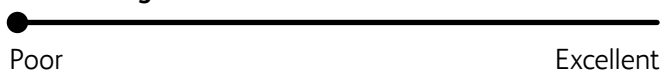
The questions on this page are about your own opinion of your service's performance during lockdown. Answers are anonymous and we would encourage you to be as frank as possible.

***4. Within current constraints how much effort do you think/feel your library service has put into understanding community needs during this time?**

● None Substantial

5. Please explain your rating on the previous question if you wish to:

***6. Overall, how well do you think your library service has met the needs of its community during this time?**



7. Please explain your rating on the previous question if you wish to:

***8. Are you familiar with the specific services that your library service has developed/offered to the public during lockdown?**

- Yes
- No

LIBRARIES IN LOCKDOWN – SERVICES

***9. Please indicate which, if any, of the following services your library service offered digitally at any point during lockdown:**

- Access to e-audio
- Access to e-books
- Access to e-newspapers
- Access to eMagazines and e-Comics
- Access to eReference resources
- Stories and songs for babies and toddlers
- Story times for children
- Hands-on science activities
- Lego clubs
- Code clubs
- Arts and craft activities (children/families)
- Arts and craft activities (adults)
- Wellbeing/mindfulness activities
- Knit and natter

- Reading and book groups
- E-festivals
- Digital skills support
- Other skills for employment
- Support for homelessness
- Support for poverty
- Book clubs
- Author talks
- Promoting Newsguard Promoting and providing access to Ancestry, FindMyPast and other family and local history resources
- Providing family and local history activities
- Tours of library/archives
- Creative writing competitions
- Quizzes
- Don't know
- None of the above
- Other (please specify):

***10. Please indicate which, if any, of the following “physical” services your library service offered at any point during lockdown:**

- Contacting users or members over 70
- Contacting other users or members (e.g. isolated people, disabled people etc).
- Non-contact home delivery service
- 3D printing of PPE equipment
- Asking communities to keep physical diaries as record of covid-19 to form an archive
- Library materials to patients in hospitals
- Printed copies of forms made available for collection
- Don't know
- None of the above
- Other (please specify):

***11. Please indicate if your service provided support or services specifically aimed at any of the following groups or demographics during lockdown:**

- Babies and toddlers
- Primary school age children
- Secondary school age children
- University students
- Parents
- Older people
- People experiencing homelessness
- Families affected by domestic abuse
- Those using foodbanks
- Those with a disability
- People experiencing poor mental health
- Non-English speakers or those with English as a second language
- People on the COVID-19 'shielding' list
- Don't know
- None of the above
- Other (please specify):

***12. Please indicate whether the various "assets" of the library service were repurposed or "loaned":**

- Staff redeployed
- Buildings(s)
- Tech or IT
- Vans or mobile libraries
- Other (please specify):

13. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the services your library service offered during lockdown?

LIBRARIES IN LOCKDOWN – YOUR OPINION

14. If you are aware of anything your library service has done during lockdown that you are particularly proud of please share it here.

15. If there were any services or activities, offers or interactions that you feel just didn't translate successfully into a digital context, please tell us what they were.

16. If there is anything you feel your library service could have done better during lockdown please share it here.

***17. Where do you see your service making the biggest difference to people's lives in the months and years to come?**

LIBRARIES IN LOCKDOWN – MEMBERSHIP AND E-RESOURCES

***18. Do you feel able to answer questions about changes in membership and/or usage of e-resources and downloads in your service during lockdown?**

Yes No

***19. Did you see an increase in library membership during lockdown?**

Yes No

Don't know

If you know the increase in percentage and numbers please state them here:

***20. Did you see an increase in library e-membership during lockdown?**

Yes No

Don't know

If you know the increase in percentage and numbers please state them here:

***21. Did you see an increase in downloads of text or audiobooks during lockdown?**

Yes No

Don't know

If you know the increase in percentage and numbers please state them here:

***22. Did you see an increase in usage of e-Reference (eg. FindMyPast) during lockdown?**

Yes No

Don't know

If you know the increase in percentage and numbers please state them here:

LIBRARIES IN LOCKDOWN – STAFF

This section of the survey will ask you about your personal experiences of lockdown and any skills or attributes you have used if you have been working during this time.

***23. Which of the following most closely describes your experience of working during lockdown:**

I continued working in the library service (includes working from home)

I was redeployed to another council service (even if only for part of the time)

I was furloughed (for most of the time)

I was not working for other reasons

IF YOU WERE REDEPLOYED DURING LOCKDOWN

***24. To which area of the council were you redeployed and what was your role?**

Phone lines supporting vulnerable individuals

General/other customer service phone lines

Food or other parcel distribution

Volunteer management

Care homes support

Crematoriums and mortuary services

Other (please specify)

***25. Which of the below most closely describes how you felt about your experience of working in another service during lockdown overall?**

It was a mainly positive experience

It was neither particularly positive nor negative

It was a mainly negative/difficult experience

Any further comments:

We have broken down specific skills under different headings below. Please tell us whether you used these skills during your redeployment or not:

***26. Community engagement and customer service skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	Don't know
Community engagement/ consultation/ facilitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying and supporting vulnerable people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General customer service skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Empathy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any community engagement or customer service skills that you used which are not captured in this question

***27. Adaptability**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	Don't know
Adapt to new ways of working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work well in new teams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learn new areas of knowledge/ specialisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adapt skills gained from working in public libraries into new contexts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any adaptability skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***28. Learning and support skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	Don't know
Supporting people to understand and use information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Literacy support/reader development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital literacy support / helping people to find information online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting people to navigate services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other skills development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there were any learning and support skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***29. Digital communication and ICT skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	Don't know
General ICT skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of social media and collaborative tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online communication or facilitation skills (e.g. presenting online rhyme times etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media and PR skills (e.g. promoting digital activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there were any digital communication or ICT skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***30. Management skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	Don't know
Financial management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any management skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***31. Strategic/leadership and service development skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	Don't know
Leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partnership development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advocacy and demonstrating value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic thinking, planning and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service innovation, development and design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any strategic leadership/service development skills that you used which are not captured in this question:

***32. Knowledge and information skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	Don't know
Organising/ managing knowledge and information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using knowledge and information (e.g. data analytics etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information governance and compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Records management and archiving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collections management and development (including collection promotion)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any knowledge and information skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***33. Were there any other qualities and behaviours that were particularly useful/valued in your work while redeployed during lockdown? (please select all that apply)**

- Positive attitude/enthusiastic
- Perceptive/good emotional intelligence
- Organised/efficient
- Good listener
- Calm/able to work well under stress
- Resourceful
- Patient
- Motivated
- Kind/caring
- Appreciative
- None of the above

34. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about in relation to your experience or skills when you were redeployed?

35. If you also spent time working in the library service during lockdown (either before or after your redeployment?), would you be willing to answer some questions about the skills you used in that role?

- I also spent time working in the library service and I would be willing to answer questions about that role
- I also spent time working in the library service but I would not be willing to answer questions about that role
- I spent little/no time working in the library service over lockdown

IF YOU REMAINED WORKING WITHIN THE LIBRARY SERVICE

***36. What was your main role within the library service during lockdown?**

37. Was this a different role to your usual role in the library service?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify)

38. Which of the following best describes your usual place of work during lockdown:

- Mainly/always working from home
- Mainly/always working in the office or library
- Sometimes working from home and sometimes working in the office or library
- Other (please specify)

***39. Which of the below most closely describes how you felt about your experience of working in the library service during lockdown overall?**

- It was a mainly positive experience
- It was neither particularly positive nor negative
- It was a mainly negative/difficult experience

Any further comments:

We have broken down specific skills under different headings below. Please tell us whether you used these skills or not during lockdown and whether you had used them in your role in libraries before lockdown or not.

***40. Community engagement and customer service skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	Don't know
Community engagement/consultation/facilitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying and supporting vulnerable people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General customer service skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Empathy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any community engagement or customer service skills that you used which are not captured in this question

***41. Adaptability**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	Don't know
Adapt to new ways of working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work well in new teams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learn new areas of knowledge/specialisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adapt skills gained from working in public libraries into new contexts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any adaptability skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***42. Digital communication and ICT skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	Don't know
General ICT skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of social media and collaborative tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online communication or facilitation skills (e.g. presenting online rhyme times etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media and PR skills (e.g. promoting digital activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there were any digital communication or ICT skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***43. Learning and support skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	Don't know
Supporting people to understand and use information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Literacy support/reader development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital literacy support / helping people to find information online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting people to navigate services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other skills development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there were any learning and support skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***44. Strategic/leadership and service development skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	Don't know
Leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partnership development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advocacy and demonstrating value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic thinking, planning and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service innovation, development and design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any strategic leadership/service development skills that you used which are not captured in this question:

***45. Management skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	Don't know
Financial management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any management skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

***46. Knowledge and information skills**

	This was a new skill that I needed to use in lockdown	I used this skill during lockdown and I had been using it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown but I used it before lockdown	I didn't need to use this skill during lockdown or before	Don't know
Organising/managing knowledge and information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using knowledge and information (e.g. data analytics etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information governance and compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Records management and archiving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collections management and development (including collection promotion)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please let us know if there are any knowledge and information skills that you used which were not captured in this question:

WAYS IN WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS IN FUTURE

***47. What skills and qualities if any, would like to develop further as libraries emerge from lockdown? (please select all that apply, there is also a 'none of these' option)**

- Community engagement and consultation skills
- Service innovation, development and design
- Customer service skills
- Problem solving
- Skills in working with vulnerable people
- General ICT skills
- People management
- Social media and collaborative tools
- Project management
- Communication and facilitation skills (online or other)
- Change management and implementation
- Media and PR skills (e.g. promoting digital activities)
- Leadership skills
- Adapt to new ways of working
- Partnership development
- Work well in new teams
- Advocacy and demonstrating value
- Learn new areas of knowledge/specialisms
- Strategic thinking, planning and evaluation
- None of these
- Other (please specify)

48. Why would you be keen to develop these particular skills or qualities?

IF YOU WERE FURLOUGHED OR NOT WORKING FOR OTHER REASONS

***49. Which of the below most closely describes how you felt about your experience of not working during lockdown?**

- It was a mainly positive experience
- It was neither particularly positive nor negative
- It was a mainly negative/difficult experience
- Any further comments:

FINALLY:

50. Please let us know if there is anything else you would like to say about libraries in lockdown and/or your personal experience of lockdown:

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

51. We would be keen to follow up with some of you over a quick call to find out a bit more about what you shared. If you are happy for us to follow up with you please let us know your name and a contact detail here:

Name

Name of service

Email Address

Phone Number

Please note, we may not be able to contact everyone who shares their details.

The Carnegie UK Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913.

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